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Soviet Union

FBIS-SOV-91-249 *27 December 1991*

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NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

NOTICE TO READERS: The United States Government recognizes the independence of the republics of the former Soviet Union.

NOTICE TO READERS: The name of this book will change from the "Soviet Union DAILY REPORT" to the "Central Eurasia DAILY REPORT" with the 6 January 1992 edition. The "Central Eurasia DAILY REPORT" will cover the same geographic area as the "Soviet Union DAILY REPORT."

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Arms Control & Disarmament

Official Notes Security of Nuclear Safeguards

LD2612125691 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1200 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Report on nuclear weapons control safeguards, by correspondent V. Martynov, including remarks by M. Andreyev, "chief of the Main Administration for the Security of Communications", from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] [Martynov] Wherever the president of the country happens to go, there is always a man behind him holding a briefcase in his hand, a briefcase that many people talk about and know about.

From the beginning of the disintegration of the Soviet Union into independent states, the question was raised in the world's media: Who in that country keeps his finger on the nuclear button? We asked one other question: Who will ensure the technical irreproachability and reliability of this button? Who is responsible for missiles not being launched without a command?

[Andreyev] We check literally every possible point from which any unsanctioned launch might be carried out. We guarantee that this cannot happen.

[Martynov] This evening, in accordance with the understandings reached, following the statement by Mikhail Gorbachev, the president of the former Soviet Union, this briefcase will be passed over to the hands of Boris Yeltsin, the Russian president. [video shows correspondent and Andreyev, close-up of Martynov's hand on a black briefcase]

Worldwide Issues

IMF To Offer Aid to Former Soviet Republics

OW2412222191 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1923 GMT 24 Dec 91

[From the 25 December "Soviet Business Report" feature—transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The International Monetary Fund is ready to offer technical assistance to the former Soviet republics for the purpose of carrying out market reforms, INTERFAX was told by the Ministry of Foreign Relations. A group of specialists from the IMF plans to make a series of visits to the sovereign states in the near future. The purpose of these visits is to establish direct contacts with officials and draw up a framework of economic assistance to help these states change to a market economy and reduce inflation.

The IMF specialists intend to give full consultations to the governments of those states which signed the November Declaration with the Group of Seven on the debts of the former USSR. The consultations which are planned to begin in the first quarter of 1992 will be on macroeconomic and structural change.

In the intervening period experts from international organizations will, in accordance with a decision of the Group of Seven (G7), provide technical assistance to the USSR central organs.

UN Aide Comments on UNSC Seat Future

PM2712100591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 19 Dec 91 Union Edition p 4

[A. Shalnev report: "Russia Can Claim Seat on Security Council—United Nations Awaits Its Application"]

[Text] New York—The United Nations is working on the premise that "at the present moment the Soviet Union remains a member of the international community and a permanent member of the Security Council"; however, there are also entirely serious preparations under way for the Union's place to be taken by Russia.

This is the UN position—in the form that it was expounded to me by UN diplomats with whom I conversed both officially and in private. One of the general secretary's spokesmen says: "We know that constitutional changes are taking place in your country, and we are monitoring them. But for the time being UN and Security Council membership belongs to the Soviet Union. Undoubtedly the issue of Russian membership can be raised in the organization, and the international community will make a decision."

In the lobbies the opinion is voiced more clearly and definitely. A major UN legal expert said that "the community is ready in principle to start talking about Russian membership. There are two practical ways for this to become a reality. The first presupposes a radical change in the UN Charter, which specifically mentions the USSR as a member of the international community. But changing the charter is fraught with not altogether desirable consequences: Having made an amendment for Russia, other countries or groups of countries might seek amendments for themselves as well. For example, Germany and Japan will insist on being granted a permanent place on the Security Council. Perhaps Italy and Germany, who are entirely dissatisfied with the fact that France and Britain have places established on the council but the other states of the European Community do not, will seek collective EC membership of the council. The developing countries will also raise their voices, asking why only the developed countries are represented there on a permanent basis... In short, the method involving amending the charter is not the most efficient. But there is a second method: The international community can agree to accept Russia into its ranks and allow Russia to occupy the Union's place on the Security Council if the USSR parliament declares Russia to be the Union's successor."

And if it does not?

The appropriate decision of the Russian parliament or a joint statement by Gorbachev and Yeltsin, or, in an extreme case, the statement of Yeltsin alone, will suffice. An entirely serious juridical substantiation can be adduced for each of these scenarios because Yeltsin is Russia's lawfully elected president and, consequently, he speaks in the name of the people of Russia.

As for the possible claims of other former republics to the right to represent the Union, in the view of the experts, such claims will hardly be accepted. These republics, they told me, have declared their political independence; they have therefore seceded from the Union and have consequently lost the right to be its successors. Although, if they like, they are fully entitled to request UN membership as independent countries.

But in order to become a UN member, let alone a member of the Security Council, an appropriate Security Council decision is necessary. How will the representative of the Soviet Union conduct himself during this vote? In the experts' view, it will suffice for the Soviet delegate not to attend the voting at all. The main thing is that a negative vote should not be cast, since the USSR has the right of veto.

When will all this begin happening? UN diplomats could not give an answer, either officially or privately, to this question.

United States & Canada

Envoy Announces U.S. Recognition of Republics

OW2612191991 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1521 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] As an American diplomat of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow told IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent, the United States has recognized the independence of Georgia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Earlier, the diplomat said, the U.S. recognized Russia, Ukraine, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan as independent states and declared readiness to establish full diplomatic relations with them.

According to the diplomat, establishment of diplomatic ties with Georgia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan will depend on whether they fulfil conditions set for that. Among them the diplomat particularly noted commitment to security and democratic reform.

Canada Recognizes Commonwealth States

LD2612083891 Moscow TASS in English 0749 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Valentin Vasilets]

[Text] Ottawa December 26 (TASS)—Canada recognised all former Soviet republics as independent states late on Wednesday [25 December], and plans to establish diplomatic relations with Russia and Ukraine.

Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney said in a statement Canada recognises the independence of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Ukraines's independence was recognised by Canada on December 2.

Canada expects that former Soviet republics will observe international treaties on arms control and human rights. Nuclear arsenals should be under strict control till its elimination. Republican readiness to pay the Soviet foreign debt will contribute to negotiations, the statement said.

Mulroney, Gorbachev Talk

LD2412203491 Moscow TASS in English 1953 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 24 TASS—Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev told Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney former Soviet republics entered a difficult stage of development which can result both in "dangers and successes."

All major problems can be solved by political means in close interaction of all republics who joined the new Commonwealth, Gorbachev said in a telephone conversation with the Canadian prime minister on Tuesday [24 December].

Gorbachev said he considers it his duty to help solve all problems facing the new Commonwealth, to promote reforms and evade a split in society. Russia is to enjoy special support as it bears the main responsibility for reforms, he added.

Gorbachev was answering Mulroney's letter in which the Canadian prime minister highly assessed Gorbachev's activity as Soviet president and called him the major reformer of the century.

Northeast Asia

DPRK Envoy Clarifies Nuclear Issue

SK2712130191 Moscow Radio Moscow in Korean 1100 GMT 26 Dec 91

[From the "Focus on Asia" program: remarks by Son Song-pil, DPRK ambassador in Moscow, at a 25 December news conference at the DPRK Embassy in Moscow—read by announcer]

[Text] As you know, in the 25 November statement by a DPRK Foreign Ministry spokesman and in various other statements, we assessed the announcement that tactical nuclear weapons would be withdrawn from South Korea and the fact that the South Korean chief executive

expressed his willingness to accept the proposal for denuclearizing the Korean peninsula. We also clearly stated that we would sign the nuclear safeguards accord when the United States starts withdrawing its nuclear weapons from South Korea.

In the 18 December statement on denuclearizing the Korean peninsula, the South Korean chief executive announced that all the U.S. nuclear weapons had been withdrawn from South Korea and that not a single U.S. nuclear weapon exists there.

If, as the South Korean authorities have said, the U.S. nuclear weapons have been withdrawn from South Korea completely and if not a single U.S. nuclear weapon exists in South Korea, we welcome this, because it means that our consistent demand has been fulfilled that the U.S. nuclear weapons have been withdrawn from South Korea.

This constitutes a victory for our nation, which demands that the danger of nuclear war be eradicated by removing the U.S. nuclear weapons.

We signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] in 1985. Our main purpose was to remove the U.S. nuclear weapons from South Korea and to turn our country into a nuclear-free zone. However, the United States did not withdraw its nuclear weapons from South Korea but tried to unilaterally force us, who have no nuclear weapons, to fulfill the nuclear treaty's obligations.

If the U.S. nuclear weapons have been withdrawn from South Korea and if not a single nuclear weapon exists there, this means that our demand has been fulfilled and that prospects have been opened for solving all the problems.

One problem is that the United States, the owner of the nuclear weapons, has not made any official notification or announcement on their withdrawal. Therefore, it is impossible to know for sure from the mere remarks of the South Korean authorities, who are not the owners of the nuclear weapons, whether they have been withdrawn or not.

The 22 December statement by a DPRK Foreign Ministry spokesman says: However, since it has now been announced that there are no nuclear weapons in South Korea, we will sign the safeguards agreement under the NPT and receive a nuclear inspection through pertinent procedures, on the assumption that the United States will clarify its clear position.

If a simultaneous inspection is to be conducted, the United States, which deployed the nuclear weapons, and we must discuss it and how to remove the nuclear threats from our country.

Under the circumstances of us advancing the proposal to denuclearize the Korean peninsula, followed by the South Korean side's denuclearization declaration in which the South Korean chief executive declared that there are no nuclear weapons in South Korea, we think it necessary for the North and South to issue a declaration on turning the Korean peninsula into a nuclear-free zone. Then, this will completely remove the danger of nuclear war and greatly contribute to consolidating peace in our country.

Southeast Asia & Pacific

Australia Recognizes Commonwealth States

LD2612100991 Moscow TASS in English 0853 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Viktor Kuznetsov]

[Text] Canberra December 26 (TASS)—Australia recognised on Thursday [26 December] all 11 new Commonwealth members. Prime Minister Paul Keating said in a statement he welcomes the appearance of Russia and 10 other sovereign states on the political map of the world.

Near East & South Asia

India Officially Recognizes Commonwealth

LD2612190191 Moscow TASS in English 1815 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Sergey Karmalitov]

[Text] New Delhi December 26 TASS—India today officially recognised all members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, which had been formed in place of the former Soviet Union, as well as Georgia, J.N. Dikshit, foreign affairs secretary of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, told a news conference here tonight.

A decision to this effect was made as a result of today's meeting between Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, Foreign Minister Madhavsingh Solanki and other members of the Indian Government.

Libya Recognizes Former Soviet Republics

LD2612123791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0835 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Text] Tripoli, 25 December (TASS)—The Libyan Jamahiriya on 24 December announced its recognition of the 12 former Soviet republics. A statement by Libya's People's External Liaison and International Cooperation Bureau, carried by the JANA agency, says that Libya "welcomes the independence of these republics which have made incarnate their right to national self-determination." It also stresses the aspiration of the Jamahiriya to support relations of friendship and cooperation with all the independent states previously part of the USSR.

At the end of November Libya recognized the independence of the three Baltic states.

USSR Loses Role in Mideast Talks to Russia

LD2512151191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1254 GMT 25 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Zhudro]

[Text] Tel Aviv, 25 Dec (TASS)—After the Soviet Union ceases to exist, Russia will take upon itself the role of cochairman of the Near East peace conference, Aleksandr Bovin, ambassador in Israel, has stated.

Answering questions from journalists at a news conference held here today, the ambassador stressed that he advocates implementing a balanced policy in the Near East region. Representatives of the mass media ask whether Russia will continue exporting arms to Arab countries. If multilateral talks on regional problems are held in Moscow, A.Ye. Bovin said, the issue of military supplies will be discussed. A process of revising the policy in the sphere of arms trade is now underway in Moscow.

Discussion Centers on Policies in Afghanistan

LD2612174691 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1330 GMT 22 Dec 91

["International Observers Roundtable" with TASS political observer Yuriy Konstantinovich Tyssovskiy; Valeriy Anatoliyevich Sidorov, general director of the Information Directorate of the Scientific-Industrial Union; and Vladimir Georgiyevich Pasko, foreign political commentator of the "Mayak" radio station]

[Excerpts] [Pasko] Hello, comrades. In spite of all the attention being given today to the Alma-Ata meeting and the wish to have a say about the period our country is passing through—undoubtedly the major subject at the moment—I want to devote our conversation to a different issue. It is not simply a matter of needing time to digest the results of the Alma-Ata meeting, but the question I propose to tackle is also a topical one: Afghanistan and Soviet-Afghan relations. [passage omitted]

[Sidorov] I want to make some general remarks at the outset of our conversation, primarily stemming from Alma-Ata. It seems to me that the issue being tackled there can be put in the following terms: Do we have the prospect of living in peace, or do serious times lie ahead with the appearance on the fringes of Russia of states hostile to us and opposed on both political and economic grounds? If Alma-Ata does not lead to a trade or economic agreement, then that is the troubled political future awaiting us. I hope that such agreements will be achieved at Alma-Ata. Then we will be faced with a more long-term territorial question about developing relations with the states along the former USSR state borders.

Here Afghanistan occupies a special place. It seems to me that Afghanistan is a country that currently stands at a crossroads in world civilization. The problem is: Where is that country going? Either forces will be victorious there that will lead the country along the road to a secular Islamic state along the lines of Egypt or Turkey, or an orthodox Muslim leadership of fundamentalists will come to power in Afghanistan, and Afghanistan will then be dragged into a belt of forces very much politically opposed to us. A situation could then come about in which not only Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan, but even our Central Asian republics could be drawn into the orbit of this orthodox influence.

You may recall a conversation we had at the UN mission in Kabul, when experts from the UN mission spoke with alarm about such a prospect, about the fact that the cherished dream for many Islamic fundamentalists today is the creation of a united block of Soviet Muslim republics that could be headed by Kazakhstan, which has nuclear potential. Prospects for such a turn of events are very serious for Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Eastern Europe.

[Tyssovskiy] And for the United States too, I would add.

[Sidorov] The United States is also beginning to understand this view, particularly after the Near East war. [passage omitted]

You know, when we are looking at the situation inside the country, we often use the phrase: The economy has fallen victim to politics. In the same way our foreign economic activity has also fallen victim to politics. We see this particularly vividly in relations with Afghanistan. I recall Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev recently saying that our task is to bring morality back into foreign policy. Well, those are fine words and a fine aim, but I do not think that Gorbachev's new thinking or Shevardnadze's many years of activity in the post of foreign minister were amoral. On the contrary, I believe that they did bring morality back into world politics.

[Pasko] That is quite right.

[Sidorov] All the same, the subtext in the Russian foreign minister's words can be decoded in the following way: Everything done by our predecessors in relation to Afghanistan was bad. The whole of the policy conducted by our communist government with respect to Afghanistan was bad. Everything has to be begun anew, everything turned on its head. Then things will be morally good.

That is the kind of policy we are now seeing, with economic links that had been devised now being destroyed. I personally came back from a trip to Afghanistan with the impression that we spent 10 years bombing that land and now we are blowing up its economy. [passage omitted on Afghan potential]

We have to base ourselves on reality where that country is concerned. The reality is that Najibollah will most likely not stay in power. Today he controls a significant part of the territory. He controls the situation. The country's smooth transition to a milder regime of administration depends on cooperation with him, as well as on cooperation with the opposition. We should not be taking sides. We should be conducting an equal and beneficial dialogue,

both with the oppposition and with the Najibollah government. That, in my view, should be the essence of our policy toward that country. [passage omitted]

[Pasko] It seems to me that things have come to the point where a Madrid-type meeting is needed to tackle the Afghanistan question—a meeting of all countries with an interest in disentangling this conflict. The initiative for such a meeting could come from Istanbul or from Cairo, or perhaps from some other country. But I think a lead could be given by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin as president of Russia and George Bush as President of the United States. Such talks among all interested countries could help disentangle this most longstanding and bloody knot in Central Asia. [passage omitted]

Program Questions Shevardnadze on Afghan Role

LD2712131191

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian at 1935 GMT on 24 December broadcasts a 35-minute program entitled "Political Investigation," subtitled 'Behind the Scenes of War'. The program is the first in a series of four programs which seeks to shed light on the background to the war in Afghanistan. Journalists Mikhail Leshchinskiy and Ada Petrova question Eduard Amvrosiyevich Shevardnadze on what he knows and his attitude to all that happened between December 1979 and 1989.

Asked initially by Leshchinskiy about his chairmanship of the Politburo Afghanistan Commission, Shevardnadze explains that the commission was formed after the decision had been made in principle to withdraw from Afghanistan. Shevardnadze explains:

"I believe it would be fair and objective to say that we made that decision in principle at the end of 1985, after we had met the then Afghan leadership. The Politburo Commission was set up to ensure the regular and smooth withdrawal of our troops, and to ensure a regular development of cooperation with the Afghan leadership and the development of a stable relationship after the withdrawal."

Shevardnadze explains how he sought to ensure that Gorbachev's announcement of the withdrawal of troops was not dropped from his speech to the 27th Party Congress. Leshchinskiy picks up on this and asks: "I wonder how fierce the battle to secure withdrawal was in the top echelons of the party and among the powers that be. Were there many who opposed it, and what sort of opponents were they? What arguments did they adduce for leaving the troops?"

Though he refuses to name names, Shevardnadze says: "There was a battle, and that was probably only natural, given the times. It was claimed that there was a real threat of invasion by the Americans. This was the normal thing—there were lots of such things. In actual fact there never was any such threat. I have seen all the documentation. There were other arguments, too. It was quite painful for the military. I would not say everybody, but certain people were bound up with the war. The war had not been finished and the result was not known. Nobody knew how it would end—the fate of the revolution, as we used to say, and all the rest of it—yet here was the Army pulling out. It could not be said that it was leaving victorious."

Petrova maintains that nobody has ever been able to find any documentation stating in so many words that the decision had been made to send troops into Afghanistan, but Shevardnadze assures her that the paperwork is there—it was just not generally circulated, not even to candidate members of the Politburo. "I would say, however, that essentially the decision was made by just three or four people," Shevardnadze adds.

This point is picked up by Leshchinskiy: "Three or four people—moreover very elderly and not always quite compos mentis. Surely three or four people could not have reached this decision? Somebody must have prompted them?"

Shevardnadze replies: "I do not believe it was a question of departmental interests alone. The times were different. The outlook was different, the view of the world and the philosophy. It all played its part." He continues: "These were the years of the cold war and global tension. There was not just the opposition of the West, but extremely difficult relations with China—that was the direction which was considered perhaps the most dangerous and vulnerable. This must all be remembered. You must also remember that we did not have particularly good relations with our neighbors—take Iran, for example. These were difficult years. So presumably it was thought to be a necessary—a vital—step to secure our southern borders in the interests of stability, security, and the strategic goals of our foreign policy."

In answer to a question from Leshchinskiy, Shevardnadze confirms that the decision to withdraw completely from Afghanistan had been made in principle by the January before the withdrawal began, but that the way it was to be done—in phases—was still then uncertain. "I must say now that on this point the military were right: Now that I analyze it, once the decision had been made we should have withdrawn immediately."

Leshchinskiy asks: "Do you think our continuing consignments of supplies are perhaps nurturing the war in Afghanistan? How do you regard the fact that we are supplying them with arms and provisions worth several thousand million dollars a year? The very foodstuffs that we are lacking."

Shevardnadze tries to turn the question to the moral obligation to save as many people as possible through food suplies and generally to the question of obligations freely undertaken. The USSR supplies weapons to Afghanistan free of charge because had it not been for its intervention nobody knows how things might have turned out. Leshchinskiy recognizes this as a moral duty before a country destroyed by the Soviet Union, but insists on an answer to his original question about the

supplies nurturing the war. He adds: "We are supplying these not out of goodwill or as a consciousness of our moral duty, but in continuation of the ideology that involved us and our Army in the first place."

Shevardnadze responds by saying: "I do not agree with that. I believe that, once our troops withdrew it was not so much a question of ideological influence or ideological considerations as of a weak point in the Geneva Accords. We never managed to reach agreement with Pakistan or the Americans that we would not supply weapons, and that they—particularly the Americans—would not make deliveries or lend material or any other support to the opposition."

Asked point blank how he views the actions of the Soviet military in Afghanistan, Shevardnadze comes out with what he admits to be the standard response: They fulfilled their duty to their oath and their Motherland. "I suffered terribly each time I returned from Afghanistan. I always felt my life had been shortened by 10 years whenever I saw our lads, knowing as I did that this was a senseless war. A totally senseless war."

As to the way Shevardnadze sees it, he says: "By making the decision to withdraw our troops, we won the Afghan war." The decision heralded a new stage in development—one in which there could be better relations with the West, and a normalization of relations with China and Iran. He still has hopes of a reconciliation in Afghanistan.

Asked finally whether he has any regrets about the way he acted over Afghanistan, Shevardnadze replies: "You know, I have. Back at the time when the decision was made to send in the troops, I and some others—and we were not exactly without influence—ought to have shouted out that we were convinced a mistake was being made. A terrible mistake that would have tragic consequences. We should have spoken out. But at the time I could not muster the strength and the courage to do so."

Leshchinskiy says that everybody in the Soviet Union was guilty of the same thing, but Shevardnadze argues: "Yes, everybody was guilty, but most of all those who could—who had the opportunity—to say something." He concludes in a very subdued voice: "My conscience hurts." However, he has no doubts as to the rectitude of later decisions he was involved in—specifically withdrawing the troops.

Mujahidin To Discuss POW Exchange in 1992

LD2612134191 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1500 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] A news conference was held in Moscow today by spokesmen for the USSR Presidential Committee for Internationalist Soldiers. On the top of the agenda was the fate of Soviet POWs in Afghanistan. Ruslan Aushev, chairman of the committee, stated that mujahidin from Ahmad Shah Masud's group have confirmed that they are ready to start talks with official Soviet representatives on the handover of POWs held by them. However, talks will not take place until after January 1, when deliveries to Afghanistan of Soviet military hardware, ammunition, and fuel cease.

Iraq's Tariq 'Aziz Cited on USSR Situation

PM2712115791 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 26 Dec 91 p 5

[Interview with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz by B. Zemtsov and V. Shestopalov; in Iraq; date not given: "Tariq 'Aziz: Leader on Scale of Peter the Great Needed"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Excerpts] Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister of Iraq, member of the Revolution Command Council, and member of the Ba'th Party Regional Leadership, received special correspondents from SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA, RUSSKIY VESTNIK, and DEN in his residence and gave them an interview. We now offer readers extracts from the conversation. [passage omitted]

[SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA] Talking about the present situation in the Soviet Union, one is bound to mention the qualities of the leaders representing the upper echelons of power in the country.

['Aziz] I do not intend to characterize the people whose names are associated with the USSR's present domestic and foreign policy. That would be tactless. After all, I have met with many of them more than once and our relations were fine. I shall say one thing: The present situation in the USSR is so serious that it needs leaders of the scale of Peter the Great or Lenin. However, no one in Russia today approaches the scale of these giants of history.

[SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA] A characteristic feature of the current sociopolitical situation in our country is the patriotic movement that is gathering momentum. Its sympathies and support are on the side of the Iraqi people in their resistance to U.S.-Zionist aggression. Is Iraq ready to cooperate with it?

['Aziz] On behalf of the whole Iraqi people I should first like to use the opportunity to thank representatives of the patriotic movement and all USSR citizens who have supported us at a difficult time. Friendly relations have formed between our peoples over the decades and no one can destroy them overnight.

We have always been friendly and had strong ties with the USSR peoples not because there were Communists in power in your country but because their policy was correct. That policy reflected mutual interests. The USSR's role in the international arena in the fifties-seventies was a worthy one. In those days the authority of the Soviet Union deterred aggressors and supported those who had chosen an independent path of development. By its prestige and strength the USSR ensured international equilibrium and guaranteed peace to all the peoples.

We sincerely wish that your country recover from all its ills and regain its rightful place in the international arena. The Russian and Iraqi peoples have always had friendly relations. The experience of our countries' cultural and economic cooperation is unique.

[SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA] What can you tell us about emigration from the USSR to Israel?

['Aziz] Israel's territory is limited, its cities are already overcrowded.

Where are the immigrants to be housed in Israel? On lands plundered from Arab states, of course. The Soviet leadership sees nothing reprehensible in that. Yet quite recently it advocated the liberation of the 22,000 square kilometers of Arab territories illegally occupied by Israel. The present Soviet leadership is directly encouraging Israel's annexation of other people's lands. [passage omitted]

Sub-Saharan Africa

TASS Notes De Klerk Remarks on Gorbachev

LD2712014991 Mosocw TASS in English 2034 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Yuriy Pichugin]

[Text] Harare December 26 TASS—South African President Frederik de Klerk spoke highly of the activity of former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev who inspired changes that have brought about an end of the cold war. In a statement circulated in Pretoria on Thursday [26 December] de Klerk said that the Soviet Union's revision of the policy of involvement in regional conflicts, including South Africa, predetermined Namibia's independence and Cuban troops withdrawal from Africa.

De Klerk stated Gorbachev had set the beginning to the process which had in the long run eliminated the system of inhibiting centralised control over political, economic and social life in the USSR and opened to Central and East European countries the road to the restoration of freedom and choice of their own model of statehood. De Klerk noted this healthy process would still take much time and require conscious and purposeful effort to overcome vast damage done by communist ideology.

De Klerk regretted the fact he had had no occasion to meet Gorbachev as de Klerk's planned visit to Moscow had been called off. But in his personal message he had explained the reasons compelling that step and confirmed the invitation to Gorbachev to visit South Africa.

The South African president conveyed to peoples of the former Soviet Union sincere wishes of success from all South Africans on the road to peace, prosperity and democracy.

East Europe

Bulgaria 'To Cooperate' With Commonwealth

OW2512220591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1513 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Bulgaria has supported the agreement reached between the 11 former Soviet republics which formed the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] that the Soviet Union's seat in the U.N. Security Council should belong to Russia. In its Wednesday's [25 December] statement Bulgaria's Foreign Ministry also gave support to the forming of the CIS.

Bulgaria said it is willing to cooperate with individual states that used to make up the USSR. It said it hopes that they will honour the Soviet Union's commitments, particularly in regard to nuclear and conventional arms.

'Troika's' Quest for EC Membership Viewed

PM2712112791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Dec 91 Union Edition p 5

[B. Rodionov article: "New Members for European Community. East European 'Troika' Become Associate Members of European Community"]

[Text] In early fall, the prospect of Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia becoming associate members of the European Community seemed extremely vague. Some members of the community—France, in particular—were clearly trying to slow down this process, pointing to the need to protect their farmers against an influx of cheap agricultural produce from East Europe. In my opinion, it had just as much to do with politics as with beef (which is now being sent to us, incidentally, as part of the Western aid package). West Europe wondered whether the three countries, which have been at great pains to stress their "pioneering" role in the smashing of the totalitarian system and the establishment of a market economy, should be given such a handicap while other countries in the region—Bulgaria, for example—were also eager to join the community. Meanwhile, the situation in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union was still unclear.

In my view, the rapid disintegration of these two state formations, changing as it does the correlation of forces in Europe, was the decisive argument "in favor" of the agreement reached in Brussels. The European Community now has an outpost in East Europe, a "cordon sanitaire," if you like, against destabilization and chaos. This outpost could be joined in the near future by Croatia and Slovenia in the south and the Baltic republics (maybe not only the Baltic republics) in the east.

Is there reason to fear that EC membership for the "troika" is directed against our interests? I do not think so, unless you mean Moscow's "special interests" in East Europe, of course, which we have had to give up for lost.

Naturally, because of its geopolitical position, our own emerging Eurasian Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] cannot aspire to a "return to Europe." But it must find ways to cooperate with the "greater" European Community now taking shape—stretching from Lisbon to Warsaw, and from Oslo to Budapest and Athens: first and foremost, the formation of a common economic area. The Paris Charter for a new Europe offers good guidelines in this respect.

Various points in the agreement between the "12" and the East European "troika," such as the formation of a single free economic zone and close cooperation in investments, science, technology, education, transport, and communications, are undeniable evidence that integration within our own CIS should also move in this direction.

Addressing the special ceremony, the heads of the three new member countries' delegations—J. Antall, M. Calfa, and L. Balcerowicz—said that the "era of all-European integration" has now begun. There was not even a hint of nostalgia for unlimited sovereignty and full independence. The most important thing in their eyes is that they have managed to leap into the last carriage of the departing train. Not least because they have worked together in a coordinated, harmonious fashion, without antagonizing each other. We should learn from them!

West Europe

Germany Transfers USSR Relations to Russia

LD2612174591 Moscow TASS in English 1731 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Lev Volnukhin]

[Text] Bonn December 26 TASS—Germany today established diplomatic relations with Russia, transferring to it diplomatic relations it had so far had with the Soviet Union. Hans Schumacher, spokesman for the German Foreign Ministry, announced this in Bonn.

He said that Germany simultaneously recognised Ukraine which had stated its consent to the list of the criteria formulated by the European Community for new states. The German Consulate-General in Kiev is transformed into embassy.

The spokesman for the German Foreign Ministry said that other republics of the former Soviet Union will be recognised and diplomatic relations with them established as they confirm their consent to the aforementioned list of EC criteria.

"We expect this to happen throughout the day", Schumacher said.

Supreme Soviet

Text of Republics' Commonwealth Declaration

LD2612153891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1300 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 26 Dec (TASS)—Below follows the text of the declaration adopted today by the Soviet of Republics of the USSR Supreme Soviet in connection with the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States:

"Guided by the wish expressed by the supreme state bodies of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenia, the Republic of Uzbekistan, and Ukraine on the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Soviet of Republics of the USSR Supreme Soviet states that, with the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the USSR ceases its existence as a state and subject of international law.

"The Soviet of Republics of the USSR Supreme Soviet asks the heads of the independent states to examine the questions:

"Of the legal succession to the USSR and Union bodies of state power and administration in connection with the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States;

"Of the establishment of an interparliamentary body of the Commonwealth with the aim of preserving the single legal, economic, humanitarian, and ecological space on the territories of the member- states of the Commonwealth; and

"Of the ratification, implementation, and renunciation of the international treaties concluded by the USSR before the establishment of the Commonwealth.

"The Soviet of Republics of the USSR Supreme Soviet calls upon the supreme representative bodies of state power and the heads of Commonwealth member states to take every measure they can to ensure the rights and freedoms of citizens regardless of their nationality and in accordance with the declaration on human rights and freedoms, peaceful cohabitation of the peoples of the Commonwealth, the democratic development of their statehood, good-neighborly relations and cooperation with the states and peoples of the world community, and unswerwing fulfillment of international obligations proceeding from the treaties and agreements of the USSR.

"[Signed] A. Alimzhanov, chairman of the Soviet of Republics of the USSR Supreme Soviet"

Last Session Accepts Gosbank Resignations

LD2612222891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1717 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 26 Dec (TASS)—The resignation of Viktor Gerashchenko, chairman of the former USSR's State Bank, and of his first deputy was accepted today by the Soviet of Republics of the USSR Supreme Soviet at its final session. As is well known, the USSR Gosbank has like other Union structures been abolished, but legally only parliament, which confirmed the bank's leaders in their posts, was able to release them from these posts.

In connection with the cessation of the work of USSR bodies, the Soviet of Republics passed a resolution deeming members of the USSR Supreme Court, judges of the Supreme Court of Arbitration, and members of the collegium of the USSR Procuracy to be released from the performance of their official duties from 2 January with a one-time payment equal to three months' earnings. Those of the aforementioned engaged in examining urgent materials and cases and preparing them for handover will continue to perform their duties for the time needed, but not later than 2 February.

Political & Social

Gorbachev's Future Goals, Plans Outlined

To 'Disappear' For Two Weeks

LD2612234891 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2109 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Remarks by former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to foreign and domestic correspondents in the foyer of the Hotel Oktyabrskaya in Moscow on 26 December; from the "Television News Service" program—recorded]

[Text] My role is changing, but I am not leaving my political sphere, my public sphere, of activity, and you and I will have the opportunity to meet again. Now, for the next two weeks, I will disappear. But not physically. [laughs] Simply to come to my senses. And, further than that, I have great intentions and plans. In any case, the idea is going around, the thought is abroad, that Gorbachev will head the opposition, and one of our newspapers said that basically Gorbachev can only fulfill himself if he heads the opposition. I ask myself, against whom, against what course, what political line? No. I have had a conversation with Comrade Yeltsin. I told the Russian president that so long as the Russian leadership adheres to the course of democratic transformations and reforms, it can rely not only on my support, but also on my defense. I believe that the most important events are still ahead and that you and I will still have some work to do.

Clash Would Be 'Worst Thing'

OW2612181991 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1727 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ex-Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev told journalists Thursday [26 December] that he might "go off the

stage for three weeks or so to draw a line between my previous performance and those new duties that I'm going to take up."

Mr. Gorbachev reiterated the main political reasons for his resignation that he had listed in his Wednesday's [25 December] TV address to the nation, and said that he would not be in opposition to the Government of Russia as long as the latter continued its policy of reforms. "The worst thing that may occur is a clash. This must be ruled out," Gorbachev said.

He said he had not talked with his mother about his resignation, since he "didn't want to worry her," but noted that she would be sure to accept his move with understanding.

Regrettably, politics and morals are not invariably compatible," the ex-president observed and added that he had done his best to bring the two spheres closer together.

Plans For New Year

LD2712101691 Moscow TASS in English 0957 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 27 TASS—The former Soviet president, Mikhail Gorbachev, plans to visit his mother in the Stavropol Region, southern Russia, after the new year, which he will spend in Moscow, a former Soviet presidential staff official told TASS.

Comparison of Gorbachev Letter to Alma-Ata

CM2612192891

Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian on 20 Dec 1991 carries in its Union edition on pages 1, 2 the full text of the letter from M.S. Gorbachev to the participants of the Alma-Ata meeting. The IZVESTIYA item, entitled "M. Gorbachev Proposes A Name: Commonwealth of European and Asian States—CEAS," has been compared with the Moscow TASS International Russian version published in the 20 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 13, revealing the following variations:

Page 14, first column, last paragraph, fourth sentence reads: ...the condition and maintenance of the Armed Forces... (changing "maintenance" to "composition")

Politicians Remark on Gorbachev Resignation

LD2712103991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1145 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 26 Dec (TASS)—Only the Russian tricolor is flying above the Moscow Kremlin today. The red banner of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was let down at 2000 on Wednesday [25 December] following an instruction by the USSR president soon after he announced his decision to resign.

Many who saw and heard the last word of the person who had liberated Soviet society politically and socially felt sorry at the fact that the "seeing-off" of Mikhail Gorbachev took place "on the air", on the television screen, and not in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses. Many politicians, according to a poll which was conducted today by TASS correspondents, think nevertheless that what happened was bound to happen.

Stanislav Shushkevich, Chairman of the Republic of Belarus' Supreme Soviet, in a telephone conversation with a TASS correspondent, today viewed USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation as a positive fact. At the same time, he stressed that "Mikhail Gorbachev's political address to the people could have been more optimistic".

According to Georgian Foreign Minister Murman Omanidze, Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation is "a direct consequence of the disintegration of the USSR".

In the opinion of Viktor Ishayev, head of administration of Khabarovsk kray, the USSR president failed to forecast the situation in the country and keep it under control, therefore he made an honest decision.

Vyacheslav Novikov, chairman of Krasnoyarsk Kray Soviet of People's Deputies, is confident that "Gorbachev by right will remain in history as one of the greatest reformers of the 20th century who returned the one sixth of land back to world civilization". However, "companions of Gorbachev's reforms"—the bloody events in Nagorno-Karabakh, Georgia, and Moldavia—can be regarded as the result of indecisiveness by the former president in untying accumulated problems.

Anatoliy Aksenov, chairman of Sakhalin Oblast soviet, thinks that "justice should be done to the initiator of the process which was started in 1985, but as a political figure he failed to cross the rubicon which would have been followed by radical economic reforms".

Vasiliy Lapitskiy, chairman of the board of the People's Party of Free Russia, marked an "outstanding role" by Mikhail Gorbachev in the history of the country. The leader of the party said that the resignation "does not in any way mean a political demise of Mikhail Sergeyevich, but is simply a period in his political career".

Valeriy Khomyakov, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Democratic Party of Russia (DPR), is convinced that "in spite of mistakes by the USSR president, he deserved a more ceremonial seeing-off". The DPR leader expressed confidence that "Mikhail Gorbachev will not disappear from the political horizon, and like Margaret Thatcher, will still be popular in political circles in future".

Yakovlev Analyzes 'Democratic Transformations'

LD2712100491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0100 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 27 Dec (TASS)—The revolution "from above" has exhausted itself, thinks Aleksandr Yakovlev, the well-known political figure and one of

the founders of the Movement for Democratic Reforms. His article devoted to an analysis of the democratic transformations in our country is published in the newspaper TRUD today.

The inner paradox and entanglement is the main thing in the present situation. At present the path toward the most progressive transformations is open. However, the tendencies making democratic prospects all the more difficult and remote are increasingly making themselves felt.

In the opinion of Yakovlev, the democratic forces are currently experiencing a dangerous period. "It is dangerous not so much because of a threat to them from the outside, but because of the possibility of internal degeneration capable of ending in new authoritarianism." What is bad, the scholar notes, is that at present democracy is without a strong, civilized opposition that can stake itself upon qualified parliamentary compromises.

The author writes that people "have turned from the old system, but they are already turning from democratic power." If these tendencies are not nipped in the bud, Yakovlev stresses, then there will be mass hysteria, intensified interethnic clashes, and everyone settling accounts with one another. Then both the new democracy and yesterday's reaction will be swept away, the author notes.

The program for the country's revival, in the opinion of the politician, consists of departyization, demilitarization, denationalization, decollectivization, ecological deindustrialization, demonopolization, and deanarchization.

Shevardnadze Sees Danger in Decay of Union

LD2612212591 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 2000 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze believes that the decay of the Soviet Union is fraught with certain danger. Interviewed by the U.S. television network CNN, Shevardnadze said that the former Soviet republics that now form a new Commonwealth lack the experience of running their own affairs independently, and for that reason excesses in some of them were possible. Eduard Shevardnadze appreciated Mikhail Gorbachev's contribution to forming a new historical reality. He also said that the president of Russia, Boris Yeltsin, was another politician capable of quick and bold decisions.

Bessmertnykh Comments on Future Foreign Policy

OW2412221191 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1918 GMT 24 Dec 91

[By diplomatic correspondent Petr Vailiyev; from "Diplomatic Panorama" feature—transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Union Foreign Relations Ministry is no more. Eduard Shevardnadze, who was Soviet foreign minister during two periods, returned to the mansion occupied by the Foreign Policy Association on Elizarova Street on Monday [23 December]. Technically, the Union Foreign Relations Ministry structures continue their work though it is not yet clear what is in store for them. With the transfer of the ministry's Moscow and foreign staff and facilities under the authority of the Russian Foreign Ministry, it would be realistic to expect a restructuring program and job cuts. Besides, now "the chief burden of the diplomatic load the Union ministry had borne now rests with the Russian Foreign Ministry," said Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, another ex-Soviet foreign minister. I hope that the Russian diplomacy will absorb the best of what our common diplomacy had accumulated, and also what has been a tradition of the Russian diplomacy."

One of the acutest development issues today is relations between the two diplomatic structures: will there be a split, given the new situation since the tables have been turned? Mr. Bessmertnykh believes that there will not be any cracks in relations between the two structures. "Serving the interests of the Union, the Union diplomacy naturally did a lot for Russia itself." It is noteworthy that Mr. Bessmertnykh himself, who assumed command of the Union Foreign Ministry last January, assigned priority in his work to the idea of "surrounding the Russian space with a ring of good-neighbourhood [as received] and real goodwill."

Mr. Bessmertnykh hailed Russian foreign ministry Andrey Kozyrev's willingness to make use of the Union Foreign Ministry's expert potential. "This is a prized asset that can serve Russian interests. If lost, it may take decades to restore," said the ex-minister. He also believes that the desire of the Russian government to use the potential of the Union diplomatic establishment "makes for the successful work of Russian diplomacy in the future."

The future of the Union Foreign Ministry has such in common with that of the Soviet state. "In essence, the changes did not come as a surprise to me," added Mr. Bessmertnykh. "The state moved toward a growing independence and full sovereignty of the former Soviet republics. However, the manner and speed of the changes did come as a surprise to me," said he. According to the ex-minister, the rush of events has its benefits because "the vacillation that was seen in the past began to play an extremely negative role."

The then Soviet foreign minister, Mr. Bessmertnykh played quite an active role in the Novo-Ogarevo process, i.e., the preparation of a project of a new Union treaty in the spring and summer of 1991. He was directly involved in work on some of the project's provisions, including that on cooperation of its future members in the international arena. "The birth of the project of a new Union treaty was attended with agonizing pangs," says he. "These pangs were what braked work on the project. As soon as a number of items have been harmonized, absolutely new political situations took shape. As a result of this, the Union treaty made less and less sense. Under these conditions, the emergence of the commonwealth was quite a

useful undertaking because it is predicated on the idea of unity, not disunity," noted Mr. Bessmertnykh.

Predicting the developments, the ex-minister named a number of factors which he believes will have an impact on the situation. The foremost of them is the domestic political and economic situation in each of the countries making up the commonwealth.

Secondly, such will depend on the development of a commonwealth mechanism. According to Mr. Bessmertnykh, the community must have coordinating mechanisns. A new centre is in order, believes Mr. Bessmertnykh, that would be quite different from that which existed earlier, but there must be a new coordinating structure. It will come in handy when the member countries want an arbitration structure in case of disputes between them. "Until now, the quarrels have been between the republics and the centre. With the centre gone, it would be naive to believe that the new commonwealth will always live in complete harmony," says Mr. Bessmertnykh.

Thirdly, what the commonwealth has in store for it also depends on how the outside world will build relations with it. Attempts to tear the new commonwealth asunder cannot be ruled out, for example.

Finally, there is the question of the nuclear weapons on the territory of the four ex-Soviet republics. According to Mr. Bessmertnykh, up to now many pronouncements concerning these weapons have been declarative, and the leaders are not fully alive to the huge potential danger of leaving this issue unresolved. "I don't believe it to be susceptible to solution at the moment," said the ex-minister.

"Today everyone is talking of the nuclear button. But the question goes beyond that: the point is that step by step nuclear weapons may become a factor influencing the foreign political situation in one of the four states or in all of the four," said Mr. Bessmertnykh. "As soon as this takes place, nuclear weapons will become an instrument of internal political strife. This would be very dangerous and would lead to changes in Europe and the global strategic stability."

Discusses Experience as Minister

LD2712040391

[Editorial report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 1930 GMT on 20 December 1991 broadcasts a 60-minute recorded interview with former USSR Foreign Minister Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Bessmertnykh with Russian TV observer I. Menzelintsev, KOMSOMOLSKYA PRAVDA observer Aleksandr Vasilyev, and NOVOYE VREMYA observer Galina Sidorova, on the "Telepress" program.

The interview begins with Bessmertnykh discussing his experiences in the United States. He says that his experience of America had helped him to understand the United States intuitively. He reflects on why America has always attracted immigrants willing to make a go of it in their adopted home.

Video shows New York, and Menzelintsev speaking to New York Mayor David Dinkins. This prompts a discussion between Menzelintsev and Bessmertnykh about the United States as a melting pot and the position of blacks in American society.

Bessmertnykh reminisces about his time at the Washington Embassy. He discusses his involvement in the SALT-II Treaty negotiations and talks about life in Washington.

At 2001 GMT, KOMSOMOLSKYA PRAVDA observer Aleksandr Vasilyev asks Bessmertnykh about his feelings on becoming Soviet foreign minister. Bessmertnykh says that his line on foreign policy was essentially a continuation of Shevardnadze's. He says that he had confidence in the sincerity of the American side's desire to reach an agreement, while remaining aware that negotiating partners will also be acting out of tactical considerations. Asked about America's present attitude toward Gorbachev and Yeltsin, Bessmertnykh says that there was no room for sentiment in politics, but that Bush no doubt remained well-disposed toward Gorbachev on a personal level.

Menzelintsev and Bessmertnykh go on to discuss small business and the enterprise culture exemplified by immigrants to the United States and the American business world in general.

Next, NOVOYE VREMYA observer Galina Sidorova is shown interviewing Bessmertnykh. She says: "I am the NOVOYE VREMYA observer who managed to find out what U.S. Secretary of State Jim Baker and Aleksandr Bessmertnykh discussed in June of this year, i.e., that Jim Baker had warned Minister of Foreign Affairs Bessmertnykh that a putsch was being hatched within our country. Aleksandr Aleksandrovich, I would like us to cast our minds back to the day when I was covering your visit to Berlin for the ministers' meeting, when you left the Soviet Embassy in practically covert circumstances. Then a few months later, I learned in Washington that you had been discussing the putsch that was brewing in the USSR. What were your feelings when you heard this?"

Bessmertnykh answers: "What Baker said was all very unexpected for me, because we had just completed lengthy and intensive talks. When he said he wanted to talk to me about something very important, I had to leave. I could not take the press with me, unfortunately, as I sensed that it would be a rather delicate matter."

The NOVOYE VREMYA observer asks: "And yet we managed to find out."

He says: "You managed to sense that something unusual was going on. This evidently allowed you to work out something I did not intend to talk about until later.

During this tete-a-tete meeting—there were only the two of us—Baker conveyed to me reports received from Washington, referring to intelligence sources, that a coup was being hatched in Moscow. That was the June coup, not the August coup, I can confirm this fact. Such a conversation did take place. And I tried to convey this very important piece of information to Gorbachev in Moscow. And on my return, I again set out in detail what had transpired."

Sidorova says: "In what manner did you convey the information?"

Bessmertnykh explains: "We conveyed the information via a third party, for whom I tried to arrange access to our president. As it turned out later, these efforts were not decisive, as he got access anyway. On June 22, however, after the placing of flowers at the tomb of the unknown soldier—this was then done by the Soviet leadership—I went to the president's office, where he had summoned me, and we had a detailed discussion about all this."

The correspondent asks: "You did not return to this matter again?"

Bessmertnykh says: "We did not go back to this matter again in our contacts."

Sidorova says: "I mean before the actual putsch."

Bessmertnykh answers: "No, following this conversation, we held no separate discussion of this matter, and we did not deal with it again fully."

Sidorova inquires: "When the well-known events took place, what were your feelings, given that you knew what you did?"

The former foreign minister responds: "You know, somewhere at the back of my mind, I was indeed afraid that events might turn out that way. However, I did not think about that in the early hours of the morning on 19 August when I was invited to the meeting with the organizers of the Emergency Committee. For one had to think about the immediate situation that arose then."

Sidorova asks: "But did this affect your further actions?"

Bessmertnykh answers: "I think so. Even now, analyzing everything, looking back and trying to explain why, I can recall that it took me just a few seconds to tell Kryuchkov that I did not want to be a member of the Emergency Committee. The fact that it took me so little time shows that somewhere deep at the back of my mind that I still remember what I had heard in confidence from the American side and discussed in confidence with the Soviet president."

Sidorova asks: "Does this mean that for you as, by all accounts, for the president, the coup did not come as a surprise?"

Bessmertnykh responds: "When Gorbachev talked to Bush, as he recently pointed out himself, Gorbachev said to him that nothing awful was happening here. And to a certain degree, people's apprehensions were allayed too. At any rate, these apprehensions ceased to scratch the surface of my consciousness for a while. But actually the idea that somthing might happen had been in the air before the episode we are talking about occurred, and of course in spite of the fact that certain people did know and did hear something, the actual August event did come like a bolt from the blue, although Gorbachev does begin his book by saying that the coup was not unexpected."

Sidorova asks Bessmertnykh: "Were you afraid at any point?"

The former foreign minister says: "To tell you the truth, I was afraid, not so much for myself as for the country, which could have slipped in to an even more complex situation—something which I did mention to those who had been preparing the coup on 19 August. Second, I had very serious apprehensions and even perhaps fears for my family and for my son, since I refused to take part in that enterprise, to use a phrase from bureaucratic language. I was deeply worried and disturbed. That is true."

The interviewer interjects: "You refused—or to be more exact you said to your wife that she should not eat the food cooked for you."

Bessmertnykh says: "That is also true. We may have been overcautious there. But that did take place, and I warned the guard that they should take some measures to increase the protection of my family."

Sidorova asks: "To what extent did you trust your guards?"

He answers: "I, as the minister of foreign affairs and member of the Defense Council, had four security officers. All of them worked for a special security service which used to be called Nine [devyalka]. I do not know to what extent they served me or the department. But I am absolutely convinced that they had the task to protect me and regarded it as their number one task."

Sidorova asks: "What sort of work can a former politician find in this country?"

Bessmertnykh says: "I am a former minister rather than a former politician. You cannot escape politics any more than you can escape the atmosphere. And I am very actively involved at the moment in analyzing both domestic and external events, as well as fulfilling certain promises I made myself some time ago."

Sidorova asks: "Which is better—the big, wide world, or state service?"

Bessmertnykh answers: "I feel a strong and staggering sense of freedom at the moment. But at the same time, I feel the absence of a sense of duty and responsibility. I think this sort of Pavlovian reaction has been instilled in

us. There is an urge to report back to someone, but it turns out there is no one. I am my own master now."

Sidorova asks: "But you would like to come back?"

Bessmertnykh answers: "If I returned to do something similar to what I was doing in recent months, I would risk being divorced by my own wife! She has warned me bluntly on that score."

In the remaining few minutes of the program, Bessmertnykh tells Menzelintsev about levels of earnings and taxation in the United States. Finally, he says that his interest in the United States remains and that Russia could learn a few things from the United States.

Bakatin Interviewed on Role of Intelligence

924B0158A Moscow LITERATURNAYA GAZETA in Russian No 50, 18 Dec 91 pp 2, 3

[Interview with Vadim Bakatin: "One Cannot Be Too Candid Working in the Special Service"]

[Text] It is usually editorial planning meetings and briefings which are held here in Room 206, and we receive guests of LITERATURNAYA GAZETA here also. A relaxed conversation over a cup of tea, spontaneous questions and answers. Today the guest of the "206 Club" (we will now commence such a column) is Vadim Viktorovich Bakatin, leader of the Interrepublic Security Service. And whatever fate awaits this institution tomorrow, Vadim Viktorovich is one of those people whom, when you meet them, you see primarily as an individual, a personality, and only then as an official and head of this department or the other.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] Vadim Viktorovich, was a file kept on you before you became chairman of the KGB? It would surely be interesting getting hold of it now and taking a look at it?

[Bakatin] There was no file on me. People often come to me asking to be shown the material that has been collected on them. One dear lady, a correspondent, asked me recently, and was dreadfully disappointed when I said that there was no file on her.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] Now, no. But was there?

[Bakatin] I do not know. What some people needed to have destroyed was destroyed long since.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] It is said that 250 volumes of the Sakharov business were destroyed?

[Bakatin] More, 580 volumes. Sakharov's diaries, an inestimable treasure. And comparatively recently, in July 1989. There is the document.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] Do we know the people who destroyed them?

[Bakatin] Those who did it are not to blame, there was an order.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] You remember the words of the poet: "Although you may be in another skin even, your heart is still the same"? You are today having to work with the same people who persecuted the dissidents, hounded Sakharov and all that.... Is this not embarrassing?

[Bakatin] Yes, they are the same people. But we are, after all, all from the same world, from the same society, from the same system. All. And the editorial office also, most likely. So what should we do, then? Remove all those people and bring in some new ones? Where would we find them? Who would undertake to be the judges? All people, each of us, change, I believe. Should change, at least. Not only our skin, our suit but in essence also. And the question is not whether people have remained the same but whether they are capable of changing or not. The majority are, but for some: Can a leopard change its spots, as they say? There is a problem here.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] If people in the KGB are changing, why are they clinging so tightly to some exaggerated cases formerly inspired by this department? The case of the 140 billion has only recently ended, and the racket surrounding ANT [automation, science, and technology] continues, as before. Or perhaps the KGB has nothing to do with this?

[Bakatin] How could it not have had? The case of the 140 billion was, of course, inspired by the KGB, this is absolutely clear to me. And the KGB is involved in ANT—this is also obvious. Why are we continuing our involvement? Most likely because things really do need to be cleared up. But I do not now have full information. I will look into it.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] Not only these cases. LITERATURNAYA GAZETA recently wrote about the case of the entrepreneur Artem Atalyanets....

[Bakatin] I believe that a certain inertia is at work here. If criminal proceedings have been instituted, they will continue until they are terminated. But we cannot in this sphere walk away from the economy, from organized crime. Only no longer inspiring cases and or organizing some provocations involving the confiscation of papers which we have ourselves prepared and forged somewhere, but by the sole method of seeking the necessary information. The special services have great opportunities for this. If we work together with intelligence, we could help the militia and the prosecutor's office in their fight against organized crime. In the international sphere, in currency and financial transactions, say. This is now a "black hole," into which God knows what disappears, and no one has the faintest idea what is going on there.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] You said: the sole method. Does this mean that the KGB or, excuse us, the present MSB [Interrepublic Security Service] is only information?

[Bakatin] Yes, only. Our product is information, and nothing but. No active operations. It is this concept which must operate henceforward.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] You give this information to Gorbachev and Yeltsin equally?

[Bakatin] Absolutely equally.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] Every day?

[Bakatin] No.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] Upon demand?

[Bakatin] No, at our discretion.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] So both the MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] and the MSB will tackle organized crime?

[Bakatin] Seven whole organizations deal with organized crime in the United States, and do not always cope with it, believe me. Nor is the MVD coping with it with us. We do not need many examples. Take if only the crime at Sheremetyevo International Airport. Who is not involved! When I was minister of internal affairs, we swore—I do not know on what it is now fashionable to swear, on the Bible—that we would eradicate this crime. Nothing came of it. Things have now become even worse. The MSB must not remain aloof. Consider that the KGB was always an elite organization, and it was grudged neither rubles nor foreign currency. The MVD does not have our equipment or the same crime-detection laboratories. Does it make sense not using all this? No, of course not. Although some people are reprimanding me today: Why should we be getting into this organized crime? Let us be catching foreign spies, and that is it....

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] Aside from organized crime, what other areas are there in your work?

[Bakatin] Counterintelligence. Protection of the most important facilities representing increased danger to the state. And also, of course, monitoring the anti-constitutional actions of certain structures. And if in the army or among politicians or political parties a transition to some illegal business or attempts to create some structures for anti-constitutional actions begin, this is our concern also, of course. But I cannot, to be honest, say that I already possess any specific material information on this score. Although certain political forces cannot be allowed to attempt to switch to an illegal position.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] You know, we asked Kryuchkov a year ago: Do you know anything about preparations for some conspiracy? He innocently looked blank and said that he knew absolutely nothing of any such thing.

[Bakatin] So if anything, God forbid, were to happen, you would say that Bakatin also innocently looked blank.... In a hurry to "prophesy," many people could now be wide of the mark.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] In November you told a correspondent of the journal DER SPIEGEL that were there to be a putsch now, it would begin on the street.

[Bakatin] Not entirely. To the correspondent's question: "Where do you expect the new danger to come from?" I replied: "From the street." But it was translated as Bakatin having said that a putsch would come from the street. A putsch does not come from the street, mass unrest comes from the street. And it is such unrest that I do not rule out. I cannot now say to you: "Don't worry, comrades, everything will be alright, everything will be normal." I cannot. As long as we have in our economy the most complete lack of inhibition and until the market economy is sensibly tied in with measures of social protection, the danger is alive and present. People's patience is worn thin. And if mass unrest does emerge, anyone could take advantage of it. There are forces which are openly longing for interethnic strife. Some people are preaching an avowedly misanthropic ideology.... And if such unrest begins, who will stop it? The militia? The MSB? Religious figures?

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] Everyone should be involved in this.

[Bakatin] If everyone, then no one. But it was not I who said everyone. You did. Although journalists really are required to understand the situation in which we find ourselves. One spark or provocation would be sufficient to bring about appalling unrest. And with us? I will write what I want. The most total license! This is good! Were there responsibility also.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] Vadim Viktorovich, ARGUMENTY I FAKTY recently published an interview with V. Podelyakin, first deputy general director of Russia's Federal Security Agency. This is what he said: "...Bakatin continues to issue orders and to send them to the territorial directorates of Russia's Federal Security Agency over our heads.... We have learned of two orders of Bakatin's deputy—Major General N. Stolyarov—concerning the attachment of active reserve USSR KGB officers to the staff of the Russian vice president."

[Bakatin] This is rubbish. I would be the most complete idiot were I to want to pick a quarrel with Russia, with the Russian KGB even more. But there is no Russian KGB as yet; it is having to be created only now. On the basis of what? The Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Agriculture? You smile for some reason or other. And you are right. On the basis of the former KGB. I realize that this is very difficult. There is a mass of collisions. As a result some people's nerves are giving way, and they are

beginning to put out various rumors. But V. Ivanenko and I have absolutely workmanlike, normal relations. Coming to the USSR KGB, I immediately issued an order for all state security authorities of Russian krays and oblasts to subordinate themselves only to the Russian KGB. And that Stolyarov has attached anyone to Rutskoy is also rubbish. He could not have done this without Rutskoy's request.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] Papers of the persons who are leaving for overseas and also lists of people whom it is not wanted to admit to our country from overseas pass through your service, as before. The former department is, remember, no more, but the corrupt practice continues?

[Bakatin] I would today abandon the checks on persons traveling overseas. But there is an exit law, and it mentions people who know official secrets, and control over this "secrets carrier" not traveling overseas is entrusted to the KGB. This is not our business, I agree. Let the enterprise managers do the checking. Let the person joining a secret plant produce a written undertaking to the effect that he renounces the pleasure of strolling along the streets of Paris. As far as entry is concerned, however, all countries have lists of undesirables: spies, terrorists, say.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] But what kind of terrorist is the former dissident Ginzburg, to whom your service refused entry here?

[Bakatin] Aleksandr Ginzburg and more than 140 others have received entry permission. The prohibition was on ideological grounds. Inertia, once again harmful, heavy inertia.... There have been no such prohibitions in the past three months.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] It is said that earlier LITERATURNAYA GAZETA had a curator in the KGB. Does it still?

[Bakatin] I believe not. And why would we need any curators or agents? One has simply to read the papers closely. All intelligence services of the world, incidentally, use the public media. They compare, analyze.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] Perhaps you could define in two words what state security means today?

[Bakatin] Why in two? I can in one. **Security means stability.** Our times are creating daily the pretexts for some strife, quarrels, and conflicts. Between nationalities, between republics. The task is to prevent oneself being pulled into such hostility. On account of the Crimea, say, or on account of 12 million Russians, for whom in some respects, I am sure, life is no worse than ours. Even in difficult, critical situations it is essential to maintain composure and forbearance, realizing that the processes which are occurring currently are ultimately objective processes. The disintegration of an "empire" is necessarily followed by integration processes, but if we come to blows, we will be clearing things up for a century.

[LITERATURNAYA GAZETA] And, if you will allow us, the last question. Does the office of leader of the security service correspond to your personal character?

[Bakatin] No, it does not. If I am destined to continue this work in some form or other, my character will have to change. One cannot be a candid individual here. Candor is perceived as a weakness....

Socialist Workers' Party Congress Held

Opens 21 Dec

LD2612142991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1426 GMT 21 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Ludmila Aleksandrova]

[Text] Moscow, 21 Dec (TASS)—The Socialist Workers' Party [SWP], the first congress of which opened in Moscow today, has proclaimed "bringing the country to the socialist road but not a return to the old" as its main strategic target.

The SWP is yet another party that regards itself as "the legal successor to the CPSU ideas." Representatives of the SWP organizing committee in their speeches stated the main principles for the activities of the new political organization, its program theses, and its main targets.

Well-known historian Roy Medvedev ascertained that there has been "not a single meeting, not a single demonstration, and not a single protest" against the prohibition of the Communist Party. He called on those present to realize that the CPSU "has lost the confidence of the people" and "to create a new party." According to Ivan Rybkin, chairman of the organizing committee, the SWP is "the only party among 15 registered by the Russian Federation Ministry of Justice that speaks about the working person as its social basis.

Presenting draft program theses and "the embryo of the future program," organizing committee member Aleksandr Maltsev stated that the party is going to bring the country to the socialist road "only by non-violent methods, using flexible tactics, and relying on the masses." For this it is necessary, in his opinion, to learn to work in Soviets at all levels.

The party is in favor of "transforming Russia and restoring Union statehood." Therefore, in principle, it supports the Minsk agreement, however, it sees "a way to restore a Union state" in them.

Aleksandr Maltsev urged the Russian leadership to "rescind the illegal decrees on suspending and banning the activities of the CPSU and the Russian Communist Party, to return their property to them, and to give them the opportunity to resolve their political fate themselves."

In the field of economics, the SWP gives preference to the collective-individual form of ownership, opposes a "wild" transition to the market and wild "privatization,-" and promises the Russian Government support in pursuing economic reform only in the event of there being "cushioning measures" for the social protection of the less well-off. The SWP juxtaposes liberalization of prices with monetary reform as a measure which, in its view, is fairer and more effective.

Speaking of his attitude to other movements and parties formed on the base of the CPSU, Aleksandr Maltsev called for "an end to theoretical and personal squabbles" and for a push toward the unification of left forces. "Depending on parties' orientation, we could conclude an agreement on joint actions and even on merging," he said.

Gennadiy Zyuganov, secretary of the Central Committee of the disbanded Russian Communist Party, who is attending the congress, voiced the belief in an interview with a TASS correspondent that all parties that are the legal successors of the CPSU "would merge sooner or later."

But according to Roy Medvedev, apart from ideological differences, organizational principles divided the SWP from other "heirs of the CPSU." "We are not a party of rigid discipline. We allow factions and trends, disagreements, a contest of views," he told journalists.

At the morning session of the congress a decision was made to send a delegation to lay wreaths at the mausoleum of V. I. Lenin.

Leaders Interviewed

LD2612143191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Report by reporter I. Minayev on the First Congress of the Socialist Workers' Party held in Moscow on 21 December; from the "TV Inform" newscast—recorded]

[Text] The Socialist Workers' Party's [SWP] strategic task, as its manifesto points out, is to bring the country to the path of real socialism and not to try to resurrect its barracade-like image. The SWP, according to its leaders, is the only one of the 15 parties registered by the Russian Ministry of Justice that expresses the interests of those who live on a wage, and not businessmen, although the party has nothing against legal enterprise. It does not divide society up into reactionary and progressive classes, opposing totalitarianism and dictatorship, including proletarian dictatorship. In the economic sphere, it campaigns for a multistructured economy, although with public ownership predominant. [video shows congress, leaders on platform, party's Cyrillic initials SPT and hammer and sickle, interviews in foyer with party leaders Medvedev and Rybkin]

You acknowledge that the Communist Party has lost its link with the masses and has lost its prestige, but at the same time you proclaim that the Socialist Workers' Party is the successor of the CPSU. How is one to understand that?

[Roy Medvedev, member of the SWP organizing committee] The CPSU is characterized by a breach between word and deed. We do not intend to be the successors of the CPSU's activities in this respect. As for the ideas of the CPSU, we cannot but make use of everything contained in the CPSU's ideological baggage, its political capital, its scientific baggage, so to speak.

[Minayev] To prevent the collapse of the state, to halt the impoverishment of millions—these are your party's slogans. How do you intend to implement them in practice?

[I.P. Rybkin, president of the SWP organizing committee] As a parliamentary-type party we intend to operate through the structures of power. We have our comrades in all soviets at all levels today, who share our convictions and would like to operate in precisely this way.

[Minayev] The congress will continue its work tomorrow. The leading bodies are to be elected. The party will most probably be led by a number of cochairmen.

Congress Ends

LD2612145991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1548 GMT 22 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Ludmila Aleksandrova]

[Text] Moscow, 22 Dec (TASS)—The Socialist Workers' Party [SWP] ended its first congress here today, declaring itself "the inheritor of the best CPSU traditions."

In the policy statements adopted, the SWP describes its strategic goals as retaining the Russian Federation; reviving an economic and political union; retaining the cultural and historical affinity [obshchnost] of the former Union republics; leading the country out of its crisis; and "paving the way economically and politically for society to develop along socialist lines."

Among priority political measures are urgent signing of a federal treaty and conclusion of economic and political agreements with the former Union republics. The SWP also calls for "the dissolution of the Soviets to be prevented."

In external relations, the party advocates rejecting "the policy of unilateral concessions," and "taking tough measures in cases of national betrayal such as selling strategic raw materials, gold, etc." In economic matters, the congress delegates gave their "clearance" for "the working people to become co-owners of the means of production" and supported the existence of various forms of ownership. They advocated monetary reform, but opposed price liberalization and "primitive" privatization.

A resolution titled "On the Unity of Left-Wing Forces" speaks of "the need to create a bloc of parties of socialist and communist orientation." The SWP calls upon such

parties to "cast aside personal and political ambition, and combine efforts." The congress elected a Federal Council, which will now elect from among its members the party cochairmen.

Democratic Party Heads View Evolving Situation

PM2712134191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 19 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Article by G. Ivanov-Smolenskiy: "Travkin and Astafyev Criticize the Commonwealth"]

[Text] The Moscow Press Club hosted a news conference given Tuesday [17 December] at the Central House of Journalists by Nikolay Travkin, chairman of the Democratic Party of Russia, and Mikhail Astafyev, chairman of the Constitutional Democratic Party (People's Freedom Party). The leaders of the two parties gave their views on the situation in the former USSR, the Belovezhskaya agreement, and the future of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States].

Travkin described the signing of the CIS treaty as "not a very honest game by politicians who are mainly pursuing their own political and power-seeking interests." In his opinion, the reality of the situation is going to dawn on people very, very soon.

"Even someone unburdened by a knowledge of economics understands that no republic can begin economic reforms until it has established how it is going to collaborate with its former partners," the leader of the Democratic Party of Russia said. "That is the starting point. Russia should have signed the Union Treaty first—even if no one else did. If no one else had come forward to sign, the Russian leadership, the Russian leader could then have explained the situation to people: We wanted to do things as efficiently and inexpensively as possible. If the other republics do not want to do this or do not understand, we will do it the expensive way—erect borders and introduce our own customs control and currency... Then, I am sure, Ukraine would have appreciated the objective need for a political and—even more important—economic union. As it is, a new form of unification has been found specially for the Ukraine. The Union Treaty offered the opportunity to begin decisive reforms immediately. But now... Take social issues—pensions, for example. If someone moves from Ukraine to Russia, is he going to be denied a pension if the Ukrainian authorities 'have not looked into this matter yet'? And that is just a very simple example..."

Asked by IZVESTIYA how he imagined "drawing" Ukraine into a Union when 90 percent of the electorate had voted for independence, Travkin said: "A breakup would have been bad news for Russia, of course. But it would have been the end for Ukraine. Even Ukrainian economists believe that. Try jumping out of an aircraft and see what happens..." Referring to the hastily prepared Ukrainian amendments, the Democratic Party of Russia chairman also voiced doubts about the competence and reliability of the Belovezhskaya agreement and the sincerity of its signatories' intentions.

Cadet leader Mikhail Astafyev indicated two other points in the agreement of independent states that he feels are vulnerable. Namely, the uncertainty about "what is going to happen to the Army?" and "who is going to be the USSR's legal successor in international organizations?"

"You should be aware," he stressed, "that people were killed in the Dnestr region within days of the agreement's hasty signing and ratification. They were killed because the military concept of the agreement gives the government of any republic a free hand to take reprisals against rebellious autonomous formations. Moreover, no one has a right to interfere. And what is going to happen to armored equipment under the authority of various bodies? After all, small arms alone have had tragic consequences for people in the Transcaucasus and South Ossetia. And what about the oath of allegiance? In the name of what and whom are soldiers now risking their lives in the Caucasus? Finally, let us imagine the worst possible scenario: an armed conflict between republics 'with the use of conventional weapons.' Will ground-attack aircraft transport the wounded in that situation?"

Astafyev also drew attention to the fact that the USSR was a permanent member of the UN Security Council as one of the victors in World War II. Even if Russia does not become the legal successor of the former Union, Germany, Japan, and even Brazil or India could claim permanent membership of the Security Council on the basis of their real economic potential. Meanwhile, according to experts, the UN Charter cannot be rewritten.

In the opinion of the two party leaders, the Belovezhskaya agreement does not answer these very serious questions. They both stressed that the agreement was reached on the basis of "revolutionary expediency" rather than constitutionality. This sets a doubtful precedent for autonomous formations and regions, and, moreover, has already had a dramatic precedent in our common history.

CPSU Said To Be 'Working Underground'

LD2712134991 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 0900 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] A Russian member of parliament and a member of the parliamentary commission investigating the Soviet Communist Party's finances, Aleksey Sukhov, has said in an interview that the prosperous activity of hundreds of enterprises, dozens of banks, and foreign companies set up with the CPSU money proves that the party's Central Committee is working underground. According to him, the investigation has not yet found out who and how runs the shadow party economy. He

pointed out, however, that the formation of new pro-communist parties had undoubtedly been sponsored by shadow party dealers.

Trade Union Leaders Meet, Discuss Intentions

924B0150A Moscow TRUD in Russian
17 Dec 91 p 1

[Report by S. Vaganov, Minsk: "The Meeting of the Trade Union 'Group of Seven'"]

[Text] **A working meeting of the leaders of trade union centers of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, Tadjikistan, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine took place in the capital of Belarus. The meeting participants agreed on a protocol of intentions on coordination of joint actions.**

Having appraised as positive the desire of the republics' higher state organs to create the Commonwealth of Independent States, trade union leaders believe it necessary to urgently hold consultations with the heads of states and governments in order to present the trade unions position and to work out measures aimed at resolving the most acute vital problems: preventing a decline in production, regulation of labor relations, social protection of the population and its employment, migration, occupational and environmental safety, and social security and retirement provision.

The meeting participants decided to promote the creation in the states of trilateral commissions that would consider draft normative acts on socioeconomic matters, sign agreements between the government and associations of trade unions and entrepreneurs, and conciliate labor disputes and conflicts.

In the area of pricing policy, the leaders of the trade unions of the seven states of the former USSR acknowledge the need for coordinated actions in the belief that price liberalization should be preceded by social protection measures. They also believe that the list of basic necessity goods and services subject to price regulation by the state must be approved by the trade unions.

In the opinion of the participants in the Minsk meeting, coordinated actions of the trade unions will be directed at getting the parliaments and governments to conduct a flexible tax policy that would stimulate development of production. One of the demands, for instance, is to not apply the soon-to-be-introduced value-added tax to food and basic necessity goods. The meeting has reconfirmed an insistent demand to immediately implement a fundamental reform of labor remuneration which should be based on the principle of guaranteed reproduction of the labor force. The meeting participants agreed that at this point the trade unions should defend their right to manage social security while reforming it in the interests of the working people and the entire population.

Underlining the necessity to consolidate the trade union movement and to unite in the efforts to fend off the attempts to narrow down and limit the rights of the trade unions, the participants in the Minsk meeting propose to hold a meeting of the leaders of trade union associations of all states of the former USSR in Moscow this December, on the eve of the plenum of the BKP [General Confederation of Trade Unions] Council, in order to consult and work out the forms of future joint actions.

Appeal on Chernobyl Programs

LD2712131591 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1500 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] The Council of the General Confederation of Trade Unions has appealed to the heads of the sovereign states, of the former Union republics, and to their parliaments and governments, to conclude interstate agreements as soon as possible on how to overcome the aftermath of the Chernobyl accident. The unions want them in 1992 to honor at least those obligations contained within all-Union and republican programs on Chernobyl already adopted.

'Real Conspiracy' Against Press Addressed

PM2712104591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
18 Dec 91 pp 1-2

[Article by Mikhail Korolev under "Topical Subject" rubric: "The Taming of the Press"]

[Text] So, there is one less open secret. As A.N. Yakovlev has admitted (KURANTY, 11 December), the "press was deliberately kept down even under the previous regime. There was a real conspiracy against the press—raising the cost of paper and distribution like that." There is no reason to disbelieve one of the pillars of the "previous regime" when the subject in question is the past. It is hard not to agree with another of his statements: "Even now, they are trying to tame the press and force it to toe the line. They are threatening to cut off its paper supply."

We should make it clear, however, that the new authorities are not simply following the same path but making 10 times as much effort to achieve the same results. The shameless blockade of the PRAVDA editorial offices—cutting off its telephones and electricity and banning visitors from premises built specifically for PRAVDA staff and with money they have earned—which has not been organized by a gang of rampaging militants but by the Pressa State Publishing House, is simply a reconnaissance operation in the battle to tame the press. PRAVDA has been singled out for punishment because of its undeniable authority in our country and abroad. If a noose can be thrown around its neck, it will be easier to deal with the rest.

Some publications are trying to play down the importance of the conflict—but in vain. "PRAVDA is trying to make a big political scandal out of an ordinary property dispute," IZVESTIYA says in confused reproach. "PRAVDA staff obviously see themselves as exceptional

people and still regard their newspaper as the leading publication. Hence their snobbishness and blatant violation of the law," ROSSISKAYA GAZETA and TASS conclude. "It is time they got used to living without their privileges," S. Baygarov, a PRAVDA journalist himself not so long ago, who has done a great deal to propagandize the successes of "socialism with GDR colors," lectures us.

But has it really got anything to do with these mythical privileges? Since PRAVDA—together with many other publications in 1991—was artificially made unprofitable and then deprived of its party and state subsidies, unlike some of the others, PRAVDA has been treated to some extremely dubious privileges: Our building has been sealed, our female members of staff searched—obviously there are fears that they might carry off linotype machines or computers in their purses—and sometimes our pay packets have been delayed...

Enough, colleagues: Our "property dispute" concerns you far more than you think. To convince yourselves of this, take a look at your economic services' calculations for 1992. You will have your own figures, of course, but ours look like this: After decades of operating at a decent profit, in 1991 PRAVDA made a loss for the first time. The planned deficit was in the region of 23 million rubles [R]. Economists' preliminary calculations for next year have produced a stunning result: Our losses will be five to six times higher.

"The vagaries of the market system," someone will sadly sigh. But is it only the market system to blame? Take this example: Distribution, dispatch, and delivery costs, plus postal rates, are considerably higher than our planned income from newspaper sales. Are all these contributions taken from us by market forces? Surely postal rates are set by the state, for example? They will swallow up two-thirds of our anticipated income from sales...

"But others are caught in the financial stranglehold as well!" someone will object. It is certainly true that all publications are having a noose thrown around their neck. Few will be able to breathe with a rope around their throat. With the possible exception of some publications whose subscription period has been extended, while all the rest have been deprived of this benefit. Particularly favored newspapers and journals will be helped to sort themselves out at the taxpayer's expense. Admittedly, there will be no point thinking about any real measure of independence: He who pays the piper calls the tune.

Let us frankly admit to ourselves and to readers: 1992 will see the end of the independent press, amidst loud cries of success for glasnost and pluralism. Moreover, the majority of newspapers dependent on various parties and trade, creative, and other unions will go bankrupt.

Thanks to the endeavors of the former ruling party and the state, newspapers and journals are entering the market economy in a state of indigence: They do not own any premises, equipment, or facilities of any kind. In short, they have nothing they can call their own. Debts are all they can look forward to in the near future. In the stormy seas of unrestrained privatization, the press remains a tiny island where people are not even allowed to think about the right to ownership. It is fine to privatize stores, apartments, and state dachas and issue shares in enterprises large and small, but journals and newspapers are quite another matter. God forbid that any claim should be made to what the collective has long since paid for with its own hard work. The old power and the new are touchingly unanimous on this point. When PRAVDA's Statutes were being approved at a session of the CPSU Central Committee Secretariat, attempts were made to remove all reference to the editorial collective's future right to own property acquired with income from enterprising commercial activity. They wanted to keep the newspaper firmly on a leash. Nowadays, the response to the collective's attempts to dispose of what it uses at its own discretion is to cut off the telephones and electricity. Obviously they will soon be coming to board up the toilets...

I will not pretend that it does not hurt to see everything I and my comrades have earned being unceremoniously taken away from us. According to data provided by the Pressa Publishing House's economic service, during my time in the editorial office (1962-1990) PRAVDA generated a net profit of R582.8 million. If you consider that the real number of editorial staff never reached 500 and if you do not differentiate between the contribution of the chief editor and someone in the letters department, every PRAVDA employee is due no less than R1.2 million—more than R40,000 for each year. But now, at a time of rapidly growing privatization, it is being made out that none of us has even earned the right to a typewriter.

However, there is more to the situation than just grudges. The battle being waged in the Yamskoye Pole area, where our editorial office is situated, has nothing to do with property. It comes down to something quite different: A press which has nothing cannot be the "fourth estate"—it simply has to survive. It is ludicrous to talk about its independence: Those who were nothing will remain nothing. If they remain...

These observations are not addressed to the Russian Ministry of the Press and Information: I realize that it wants to keep the press on a leash. No, they are dictated by a desire to point out the danger to my colleagues in the profession who value the idea of a free press. Some of them wrongly believe that the electricity, telephone, and toilet repressions only concern yesterday's "Bolshevik publications": The new authorities will not touch us, they say. Surely they must have been put on their guard by the Moscow Soviet discussion of proposals to replace the chief editor of KURANTY and evict the editorial office from its premises when the newspaper was not completely in step with the soviet? Yes, on that occasion both proposals were voted down. But what about the next time?

Surely we will have the perspicacity to realize that the tough policy of bringing the press to ruin not only concerns PRAVDA and newspapers and journals relatively close to it in spirit, but also those who still see PRAVDA as their worst enemy, despite the fact that it is now independent? Surely we will have the intelligence to work together to prevent freedom of the press being stifled by the state and "market forces"?

I would also like to address my observations elsewhere. The fervor with which newspapers' meager income is being torn to pieces by the heads of publishing houses and communications and transportation workers smacks more of zeal than sense: What sensible master would starve a sheep that provides him with valuable fleece? How would he feed himself once he had killed it and so deprived himself of a decent income? They are presumably hoping to receive a reward for fulfilling the social imperative to eliminate what they themselves print, transport, and deliver. It is as plain as day that there is not even a hint of foresight. However, this is true of all policies concerning the press in recent years.

Majority Polled Expect Situation To Worsen

OW2712082791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0727 GMT 27 Dec 92

[From "Viewpoint"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] According to the Data news agency, an opinion poll taken by the National Public Opinion Studies Center on December 7-17 among 2075 respondents throughout the former Soviet Union (1055 in Russia, 404 in Ukraine, 409 in Central Asia) found that 22% expect the political situation to improve, 53%—to worsen. 25% found it difficult to answer.

Correlation of optimists and pessimists in various regions of the country appears to be different: in Russia—23% against 54%, in Ukraine 25% against 39%, in Central Asia 20% against 65%.

In January, 1991, 61% of respondents expected the political situation to worsen. In June—39%. After the failure of the August coup attempt the number of pessimists and optimists leveled out: 38% against 39%. Now the situation is similar to that early this year.

Margin of error—3%.

TASS Carries Press Review for 24 Dec

LD2412121291 Moscow TASS in English 0622 GMT 24 Dec 91

["Press Review"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow December 24 TASS—Almost all the Tuesday [24 December] newspapers give coverage to latest events in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi. NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA and PRAVDA express an opinion it is possible to define the events in Georgia as civil war. According to PRAVDA, the number of casualties in Tbilisi has reached 17 killed and more than 50 wounded. Clashes in Tbilisi continue while the opposition's demands remain the same—to oust President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and send him abroad. Gamsakhurdia insists that opposition troops all over Georgia be disarmed.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA stressed that Trans-Caucasian military district Soviet Army units stay neutral in the conflict and support neither of the sides.

SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA points out severe damage has been inflicted to the city buildings.

RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA informs its readers that despite the arrival of Gamsakhurdia's supporters from South Ossetia, opposition units keep on shelling the government building using missiles and artillery.

The results of the Alma-Ata meeting between heads of the former Soviet republics are given wide coverage in the Tuesday newspapers. SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA and KRASNAYA ZVEZDA carry the documents, adopted in Alma-Ata by the new Commonwealth leaders. Press comments on the meeting carefully although optimistically.

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA stresses that the shape of the new Commonwealth will be outlined more definitely after the forthcoming Minsk summit.

RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA says the Soviet Union is dead and long live the new Commonwealth. SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA stresses the duty of the new Commonwealth participants is to make life better than it used to be. TRUD says the people of the former Soviet Union must now learn anew to live together, although in different states.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA comments that reaching the agreement in Alma-Ata positive in itself, but it leaves many unresolved problems and the dialogue should be continued.

The present economic situation in the former Soviet republics and the nuclear arsenals of the former Soviet Union are the problems which are discussed most frequently in connection with the Alma-Ata meeting.

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA and TRUD carry articles, dedicated to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA evaluates the role of Gorbachev over the period which he himself had termed "perestroyka". The newspaper writes that Gorbachev "became the first Soviet president and now has to pay for it by being withdrawn from the post without any compassion and mercy by his fellow politicians and the people."

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA quotes Gorbachev as saying "I do not consider creation of the new Commonwealth a coup d'etat." According to Gorbachev, the real danger nowadays is presented not by the military but "by the street", if it is instigated by irresponsible people.

TRUD calls Gorbachev "a difficult and complex person" and predicts "his star might shine once again in future." "Gorbachev became the victim to the process of the Soviet Union's disappearance. The West still respects him despite he lost his power. People will evaluate their president in the future."

Press Review for 27 Dec

LD2712070191 Moscow TASS in English 0628 GMT 27 Dec 91

["Soviet Press Review"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow December 27 TASS—Today's newspapers publish the text of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation speech.

The Soviet military daily KRASNAYA ZVEZDA publishes an article by Vladimir Chupakhin, in which he speaks about the "results" of Gorbachev's perestroyka.

The newspaper PRAVDA carries excerpts from Western leaders' speeches in connection with Gorbachev's resignation.

U.S. President George Bush, French President Francois Mitterrand, British Prime Minister John Major, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti and other Western leaders praised Gorbachev for the historic transformation of the Soviet Union and for ending the Cold War.

The newspaper RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA offers the article "Requiem for Perestroyka" by political scientist Vladimir Leshchinskiy.

"Five years ago powerful forces prevented Gorbachev from carrying out reforms—people would have gained from them. Gorbachev resigned and perestroyka has ended," Leshchinskiy said.

Newspapers report that the situation in Georgia has deteriorated. "Tbilisi looks like a front-line city," the Soviet youth daily KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA said.

In a radio address, Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia urged the population of the republic to unite to defend freedom and democracy.

The newspaper said Soviet Interior Ministry troops have left the Nagorno-Karabakh disputed enclave.

Newspapers report that the Soviet Parliament held its last session on Thursday [26 December] to announce the Soviet Union ceases to exist.

"The attempt to build socialism has failed," KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA quotes Anuarbek Alimzhanov, federal Parliamentary Council head, as saying.

In an interview with PRAVDA, Russian Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy said the cause of all failures in the country is that perestroyka has never had a clear-cut programme.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA publishes an interview with military expert Igor Vorobyov, in which he speaks about the pace of military reform in the country.

"Military issues have risen in a different light after the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States and should be solved immediately," Vorobyov said.

He stressed, however, that the reform should be preceded by the development of a proper concept.

Former Soviet presidential adviser Aleksander Yakovlev told the Soviet trade union daily TRUD that the revolution "from above" has exhausted itself.

He warned that democracy has entered a dangerous period. "Dangerous not only because of an external threat but also because of internal transformations, which may result in a new authoritarian regime," Yakovlev said.

He stressed the need for de-partisation, removal of party organisations from state structures, de-militarisation, de-nationalisation and de-collectivisation in the country.

Commonwealth Affairs

More on Defense Ministers' Meeting in Moscow

Draft Documents Discussed

LD2612184491 Moscow TASS in English 1725 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Moscow December 26 TASS—Draft documents regulating the principles of inter-state relations in the field of defence between the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States have been discussed at a defence ministers' meeting that opened here on Thursday [26 December].

Working groups, with the participation of defence and general staff experts, are to coordinate provisions that are to be considered at the December 30 meeting of the heads of 11 members of the new Commonwealth in Minsk.

Representatives of all states that are parties to the Alma-Ata agreements attended the meeting held in the Defence Ministry building on Arbat Square on Thursday, with the exception of a Kazakhstan delegation that had been unable to leave Alma-Ata for technical reasons. The delegation was expected to arrive here later in the day, Lieutenant General Valeriy Manilov, head of the Defence Ministry's Information Directorate, told TASS. Participants in the consultative meeting are to resume their work on Friday [27 December].

Such consultations at the level of defence ministers and deputy ministers have already been held in Moscow three times. However, this one is the first meeting after

11 former Soviet republics decided to form a Commonwealth of Independent States.

Black Sea Fleet Complications

PM2712114391 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 27 Dec 91 p 1

["Own Information" report: "Will Russia Keep a Military Flag in the Black Sea?"]

[Text] Defense ministers and chairmen of defense committees from the independent states met for a conference at the Defense Ministry building in Moscow yesterday. Ukrainian Defense Minister K. Morozov was not present, even though agreement on the meeting was reached in Alma-Ata.

Journalists were not allowed into the meeting, but KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA has learned that Marshal of Aviation Ye. Shaposhnikov left the building on Arbat Square in the afternoon, and then left Moscow. Accompanied by Admiral of the Fleet I. Kapitanets, acting commander in chief of the fleet, he has flown to Kiev. Reliable sources link this departure not only with K. Morozov's nonarrival in Moscow, but also with Ukraine's decision on the full transfer of the Black Sea Fleet to its jurisdiction.

Armed Forces 'Big Question Mark'

PM2612210691 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Report by V. Litovkin: "Yeltsin Has the Nuclear Attache Case. On Arbat Square the Defense Ministers Confer, But Without Morozov"]

[Text] On 25 December, immediately following his speech on Central Television, Mikhail Gorbachev signed a decree surrendering his powers as supreme commander in chief of the Soviet Armed Forces and transferring the right to use nuclear weapons to Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

At the same moment, the technical procedure for the handover of the nuclear attache case to the Russian president took place, with the participation of Marshal of Aviation Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, who, as is known, is acting commander in chief until 30 December—until the Minsk meeting of heads of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The world community, including the United States, was forewarned—control of the strategic deterrent forces remains in one pair of hands. The leaders of Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan also agreed to this, in Alma-Ata.

But there is still a big question mark over the fate of the joint or allied—but by no means unified—armed forces of the Commonwealth. On 26 December, as was agreed in the capital of Kazakhstan, the defense ministers and chairmen of defense committees of the independent states met for a conference in the Defense Ministry building on Arbat Square in Moscow. The subject of the latest consultative meeting is the future of the Armed Forces.

The meeting is taking place behind closed doors. Journalists are not allowed in. But IZVESTIYA's correspondent has learned that Ukrainian Defense Minister Colonel General Konstantin Morozov is not present. He is planning to leave for Moscow the next day [na sleduyushchiy den], but none of his immediate entourage knows whether he will come or not.

Leaders Discuss Economic Development Issues

Situation Characterized

PM2712094691 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Dec 91 Union Edition pp 1-2

[Report by V. Kononenko: "Leaders of Commonwealth of Independent States Governments Discuss Questions of Economic Development"]

[Text] The first session of representatives of the governments of the 11 independent states that have formed the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] began in the Oktyabrskaya Hotel 24 December. For various reasons, the level of representation is not uniform. Five premiers and six deputy heads of government assembled at the "round table," but they all came with appropriate powers.

Opening the session, RSFSR First Vice Premier G. Burbulis explained that the present meeting is of the nature of an initiative. It was organized by Russian representatives, but the initiative came from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Ukraine, back in Alma-Ata.

In his briefing he reported that as a result of yesterday's hours-long meeting between B. Yeltsin and M. Gorbachev a number of documents were signed, including a document on the termination of the activity of the Interstate Economic Committee from 30 December. The accords formalized in Minsk and Alma-Ata met with full support at the meeting.

Here the introductory section of the session ended, and what was, alas, far from harmonious work began. The participants took more than half an hour to decide on the agenda. This shows that the "center" syndrome is still tenacious even when the center itself is no longer with us. By mutual consent, it was decided to examine the most pressing questions of the economic development of the independent states in the initial stage of the reforms, first and foremost price liberalization and coordinated actions in this respect. A briefing on this matter was delivered by Russian Vice Premier Ye. Gaydar. However, he promptly proposed that the CIS members not seek total synchronization of their actions, since each state has its own specific conditions and problems, and to try to reduce all the programs to a single common denominator would only waste time.

Characterizing the economic situation in Russia, Ye. Gaydar stated, in particular, that it is not possible today to ensure normal trade flows by liberal methods (without directives or coercion). The solution is to release prices. Any delay in this direction will have a dire effect on the economy. The most difficult thing is to predict the pace of price rises and influence them at the start of the reforms, due to the limited commodity reserves and the surplus ruble supply. Nonetheless, the Russian Government predicts that in January the average rise in prices should not exceed 150 percent. Commodity producers' attempts to increase prices many times over will most likely founder on the population's limited cash stocks.

Ye. Gaydar mentioned as the key problem of curbing inflation that of preventing a budget deficit. To this end a comparatively efficient tax base has been prepared, which will make it possible to bring the necessary funds into the budget. Nonetheless it will be necessary to make resolute economies everywhere, and especially in military spending. He said that nobody needs an army as large as we have today. It is planned to reduce its strength by 600,000 men, cut military purchases practically to zero, and improve the material position of military men out of the funds saved.

In the sphere of foreign economic activity, the following approach is proposed: Lift all restrictions on the export of high-temperature-processed output [produktsiya vysokoy teploobrabotki], but export raw materials only under license. Specific quotas for raw material exports will also be sold at auctions. Here 40 percent of the currency revenue should be sold by exporters to the state at a rate below the market rate. As a result, as Ye. Gaydar stressed, these and other measures should mean that by March-April the situation will already be stabilizing, inflation will be moderate, people will be seeking rather than discarding rubles, market mechanisms will start to work, and it will be possible to obtain from the MBBR [as published] stabilization credit to ensure convertibility of the ruble. That is an optimistic prediction, Ye. Gaydar said. The pessimistic prediction is that because of pressure from below it will prove impossible to ensure a budget without a deficit, and the reforms will be much more difficult.

At this stage in the Russian vice premier's speech there was a disturbance which developed into a dispute. The essence of the problem: There is a disastrous shortage of cash everywhere. The Ukrainian representative, for instance, stated that in Odessa now, because of the shortage of rubles, the national currency is... the dollar. You can buy apples or chickens only with "greenbacks." And in the Ukraine as a whole, 2.5 billion rubles of wages are unpaid. Ye. Gaydar announced in response that emergency measures are being adopted to speed up the work of the printing presses. He said that the cash shortage will peak at the end of this year. As for control over the operation of the printing presses, the Russian Government is prepared to accept any terms—including control by an appropriate international body.

As a result the first part of the session ended in general agreement that experts will work on a package of documents for coordinated actions in the first quarter of 1992, while the delegation heads will discuss the general situation in the economy of the CIS states.

Relations Not 'To Be Smooth'

LD2612232991 Moscow TASS in English 2304 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 27 TASS—Relations within the Commonwealth of Independent States which has replaced the USSR do not promise to be smooth. This was shown by a meeting of government delegations of the Commonwealth of Independent States held the other day in Moscow. Conflicts on financial and economic matters between Ukraine and Russia became apparent at the meeting. IZVESTIYA writes on Thursday [26 December] they were caused by unequal conditions in republics at a time when prices are about to be freed.

"There has already been wage and salary increases in Russia, while Ukraine cannot do this as it does not have the required amount of ready money", the newspaper writes. "When prices are liberalised, the living standards of the Ukrainian population will be eroded and whatever goods still remain on the shelves will be snapped up.

IZVESTIYA writes that Russia flatly rejected Ukraine's proposal that banknote printing factories and the mint service the ruble zone of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Ukraine proposed that the day for freeing prices be put off so that all the republics prepare enough money for that day. But Russian representatives rejected that proposal too. (Prices in Russia will be freed on January 2).

Military

Leaders Meet To Prepare for Minsk Talks

LD2612100691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0900 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Moscow, 26 Dec (TASS)—Leaders of the military departments of the independent states began a routine meeting at 1000 this morning at the Defense Ministry on Arbat Square .

TASS learned that its participants are planning to discuss several questions connected with military construction in the fundamentally new political conditions and will also clarify positions prior to the meeting of the heads of independent states in Minsk.

New Housing Construction Schedule Reported

OW1912101691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2051 GMT 18 Dec 91

[From the 19 December "Soviet Business Report"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A 1990 agreement between the Soviet Union and Germany stipulated that the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the territory of East Germany would be completed by the end of 1994. According to the agreement, the German side would bear the DM [Deutsche mark] 7.8 billion cost of building 2 million sq m of living space and of setting up a number of construction businesses within the Soviet Union.

33 SETTLEMENTS TO BE BUILT OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS. The four-year project for the construction of housing and construction concerns initially calls for setting up settlements in three republics—eight each in Russia and Belarus, and 17 in the Ukraine. Questions connected with the financing of the project will be turned over to the German Kreditanstalt Fur Wiederaufbau and the necessary funds will be transferred from Deutsche Bank's accounts.

The implementation of the project provides for open international bidding which would be conducted in several stages by each grouping of settlements, depending upon the level of readiness of the bidder's documents. Among the basic prerequisites on the part of the bidders are a yearly turnover of DM500 million (no less than DM200 million must be from construction), prior experience in construction projects abroad (preferably in the Soviet Union), and agreement to subcontract to Eastern European firms no less than 30% of the total construction work.

JOINT COMMITTEES TO SUPERVISE BIDDING. A number of joint committees have been set up to assure that the project run smoothly:

—a Soviet-German supervisory committee (headed by representatives from the German Economic Ministry, the Soviet Defense Ministry, and the financing bank) to solve the main problems connected with the implementation of the project;

—a tender committee (headed by representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, the chief of the Defense Ministry's housing authority, and the financing bank) to be in charge of forming a list of bidders and of issuing orders based on the results of the bidding;

—a consulting consortium (from the Soviet Defence and Foreign Economic Relations Committees with a group of German consultants) to advise on legal, technical, and commercial questions for its direct client—the Defense Ministry's housing authority;

—a joint Soviet-German planning bureau to prepare tender documents.

THREE STAGES OF THE PROJECT WERE PARTIALLY COMPLETED IN MID-DECEMBER. Bids were taken for two groupings of settlements, one composed of four settlements—in Vladikavkaz (northern Caucasus), Borisov (Belarus), Shaikovka (Russia), and Krivy Rog (Ukraine); and the other of five settlements in Belarus—(Marina Gorka, Lida, Bereza, Slonim, and Baranovichi), plus tender documents on the construction of settlements in the Ukraine were sold to bidders and the preconditions were established for ten settlements (one in Russia, two in Belarus, and seven in the Ukraine).

RESULTS OF THE FIRST AND SECOND ROUND OF BIDDING

Name of settlement	Construction company	Number of apartments	Floor area
Vladikavkaz	Philipp Holzmann Germany	1,156	66,120
Borisov	Enka/Turkey	725	41,760
Shaikovka	REM consortium Finland/ Turkey	1,056	61,480
Krivoi Rog	Hoffman Maculan Austria	1,500	87,000
Marina Gorka	Naka/Finland	780	45,240
Lida	Elba-bau Gruppe	880	51,040
Bereza	Germany	720	41,760
Slonim	Enka/Turkey	1,440	83,520
Baranovichi	Tekser/Turkey	600	34,800

The requirement that bidders receive bank guarantees did not permit Soviet contractors to participate in the bidding. The Vneshekonombank, the only bank in the country in a position to guarantee the financing, refused to do so for Soviet contractors.

CONTRACT SIGNING DEADLINES PUSHED BACK SIGNIFICANTLY. Experts predict that bidding for the construction of 16 settlements in the Ukraine will not be carried out until 1992, that is, considerably later than the deadlines originally stipulated. According to the tentative conditions of the competition, participants must build 18,600 apartments with a floor area of 1.07 million sq m in the space of a year. This construction will be done in the Khmelnitskii, Zaporozhskii, Krymskii, Sumskii, and Volynskii districts among others.

However, before the taking of bids, a conflict between the Soviet Defense Ministry and the Ukraine over the conditions of construction must be resolved so that the future of these settlements may be determined. It is not impossible that 15 of these settlements will be built instead on Russian territory.

The next phase of the bidding and also the competition for setting up construction firms will not be announced before the first quarter of 1992— considerably later than

originally planned. According to the initial schedule, the contract for the construction of all 33 settlements and the accompanying construction firms should have been signed in 1991. Delays were caused by opposition on the part of a number of local authorities to the construction on their territory of settlements for servicemen.

Military-Industrial Complex Institute Profiled

LD2112094191 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2152 GMT 15 Dec 91

[Report by correspondent D. Klimentov; speakers identified by video captions; first graf announcer-read introduction; from the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] News of the military-industrial complex: A unique information and economic system covering the whole territory of the former union has been created in the Central Scientific Research Institute of Information and Technology:

[Begin recording] [Klimentov] The former Defense Industry Ministry's analytical center, apart from secrets of manufacturing spy satellites and superlight materials, possessed a unique information structure embracing practically all producers on the former union territory. The paradox is that today the most complex information system was at risk of finding itself without a job. Yet, with its help, it is possible, as a minimum...

[V.A. Zheltov, general director of the institute]...to remove from the very long chain which leads to the jacking up of prices all the intermediate institutions. We must give the producer the opportunity to get to the consumer via the shortest possible route.

[Klimentov] The economics-information communications system which simultaneously involved participants in Moscow, Odessa, and Khabarovsk was tried out yesterday. The results look encouraging.

[A. Popov, operations manager] It will be five cities tomorrow, 10 the day after, and I don't see any limit. [video shows outside of institute with a plaque reading "USSR Defense Industry Ministry: Central Scientific-Research Institute for Scientific and Technical Information, the Supply and Demand of and Increasing the Qualification of Cadres"; Earth from outer space; computers; a tote board providing the breakdown of the Ministry's output as follows: Sporting guns and shotguns, sports ammunition—100 percent; sewing machines—100 percent; gasoline-powered saws—100 percent; cinematographic apparatus—97 percent; samovars—75 percent; technological equipment for light industry—77 percent; motorcycles and scooters—53 percent; bicycles—45 percent; refrigerators—40 percent; washing machines—25 percent; vacuum cleaners—17 percent; tape recorders and stereo sets—15 percent; technological equipment for the agroindustrial complex—12 percent; vehicles—11 percent; batteries—10 percent; domestic goods—8 percent] [end recording]

General Interviewed on Transcaucasus Events

PM1812130591 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 14 Dec 91 First Edition p 3

[Interview with Lieutenant General Yu. Grekov, first deputy commander of Transcaucasus Military District, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given: "Lieutenant General Yu. Grekov: Troops Will Defend Themselves"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] Our correspondent met Lieutenant General Yu. Grekov, first deputy commander of Transcaucasus Military District. The topic of conversation was naturally dictated by the latest events in the Transcaucasus.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] Yuriy Pavlovich, the current situation in the region is characterized by extreme instability. But we military men have ended up between the devil and the deep blue sea...

[Grekov] To continue the comparison, the devil can be taken to mean not only the situation in the region but also the situation in the entire country... The accelerated process of the republics' sovereignization is in progress, as are attempts in some places to divide the troops along ethnic lines under the pretense of having their own armed forces. In so doing they are endeavoring to "privatize" the Soviet Army's property, equipment, and weapons.

Today we are seeking and finding mutual understanding with the leaderships of Armenia and Azerbaijan in many problems. A direct and productive dialogue is in progress at the level of presidents and legislative organs. Although alarm cannot but be caused by the fact that destructive forces on Azerbaijani territory are using provocations to try and put pressure on the republic leadership and cloud our good relations with the population. However, on the whole, all contacts with the troops are built on a civilized basis. But lately the focus of our concerns has shifted to Georgia.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] This, incidentally, is also indicated by the sad statistics that are cited increasingly frequently at news conferences at district headquarters. But, to tell the truth, it is increasingly difficult to keep up with the figures for criminal cases.

[Grekov] This is because the statistics themselves cannot keep up with events. Over 600 transportation assets belonging to the Army were stolen in Georgia this year alone. Military shipments are being virtually blockaded. In the one day of 2 December alone, eight of our vehicles were seized in armed attacks in Tbilisi. But the most dangerous thing is that a threat to the lives of servicemen and members of their families has arisen.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] Extraordinary circumstances evidently require extraordinary political measures, including direct contacts with the republic's top people?

[Grekov] These contacts are stable and in most cases fruitful. It is a different matter when people try quite

hard to foist decisions on us which go beyond the framework of competence of the district's commander and Military Council.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] Could you go into a bit more detail?

[Grekov] The examples are obvious. As you know, lately the situation in South Ossetia has deteriorated sharply...

Two of our regiments are stationed in Tskhinvali—a helicopter regiment and a combat engineer regiment. During our last meeting the Georgian president categorically stated that the helicopter regiment is a bulwark of extremism and is waging war on the Georgian people. He says that there are people of Ossetian nationality in the regiment who are acting in concert with the gunmen. That being so, the president gave an ultimatum demanding the regiments' immediate withdrawal from the city.

A demand was also put forward to allocate to the Georgian MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] and other law-enforcement organs up to 1,500 automatic weapons plus vehicles and armored vehicles from the district's stocks, because they say that without this it is impossible to bring the criminogenic situation in Georgia under control. Otherwise the people, incensed by the troops' support of Ossetian separatists, as was clear from the ultimatum tirade, will declare civil war on us military personnel, which even the Georgian leadership will not be able to prevent.

I explained that the 19 Ossetian warrant officers performing service with helicopter pilots have absolutely no political impact on the region. Moreover, those who previously tried to engage in selling weapons to bandits under cover of the conflict have been handed over by us to a military tribunal for trial. As regards the withdrawal of regiments outside the oblast and the transfer of weapons and hardware into the MVD's hands—this is the USSR Ministry of Defense's sphere of competence. In point of fact not a single instance of troops' participation in combat operations on the Ossetian side, capable of being checked and verified, was presented to us. It is a case of emotion getting the upper hand over common sense.

I want to reiterate with utmost responsibility through KRASNAYA ZVEZDA that the Soviet Army in Tskhinvali and the rayons adjacent to it has not waged and does not intend to wage war on the Georgian people or equally on any other people.

We firmly intend to preserve the peace and not give in to emotions. We will not allow the troops to be drawn into political games.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] But such a threat, Yuriy Pavlovich, does exist today. Not only in Georgia. The noose of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict is being pulled ever tighter around the garrisons located in the border zone between the republics.

[Grekov] The uniqueness of the situation is that the administrative border between Armenia and Azerbaijan is the only geographical zone in the country where troops remain a natural buffer between conflicting neighbors. And however hard it might be for us, however tensely the situation might develop concerning Army border troops subunits, which are being shot at from both sides, soldiers and officers will not give in to provocation.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] I know for a fact that commanders in the conflict zone are extremely concerned over the ever increasing augmentation of subunits stationed in Armenia and Azerbaijan with soldiers of indigenous nationality.

[Grekov] The problem, it cannot be denied, is a painful one. They are the children of one army, but of various ethnic and political persuasions. And the weapons in their hands are combat weapons. But a soldier is a living person subject to the same emotions and the same passions, which politicians have stirred up in him. That is why I speak again of the very great responsibility borne by the two republics' leaders, political parties, and public organizations. First of all peace must be established, then all other problems must be resolved with a cool head. And those who are hoping to establish the option of setting side against side at the Army's expense stubbornly refuse to understand what is clear to every general and officer (especially to those of them who were in Afghanistan)—nobody can ever solve interethnic conflicts by military means.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] The district command has tightened up the system for guarding and defending military equipment, property, and weapons in Georgia. But after all, all this was proclaimed national property at parliamentary level and is subject to inventory. Are there no contradictions here?

[Grekov] I do not intend to discuss the lawfulness of decrees adopted by parliament and endorsed with the Georgian president's signature. The second point in these documents on "privatization" decrees: The republic organs of power enter into talks with the appropriate Union state structures. The second point, you will note; that is, first we will commit unlawful acts and then we will agree on how to cloak them in civilized forms.

The talks have not yet started but excesses have already started at the prompting of local leaders and with their blessing, excesses that people are trying to represent to us as the people's will. I am firmly convinced that it is not the people's will that is closing barriers in front of military vehicles carrying food and medicines or equipment requiring repair outside Georgia. It is not the people's will that is killing servicemen and robbing our depots. It is a bluff intended for simpletons. There can be no talk of any inventory until decisions are made at the level of the USSR political and military leadership. Let nobody even of statesman rank entertain any illusion about this or engage in deceiving or otherwise inciting the people.

And now for the first part of the question. Yes, an order has been signed on changing the system of guarding military installations and facilities. Henceforth all military motor transport moving freight around Georgian territory will be escorted by a security guard detail which has been given unequivocal instructions to shoot to kill if there is a clear attempt to seize it. This is severe but necessary. It is time to put a stop to anti-Army banditry. In future not a single service vehicle will get beyond equipment inspection stations at the district's units and headquarters without a security guard detail. We have officially informed the Georgian president and the republic's minister of internal affairs and general prosecutor of our protection measures.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] Will officers be issued with personal weapons?

[Grekov] This measure is also envisaged.

Officer Describes Situation of Armed Forces

AU2212201291 Vienna NEUE KRONEN-ZEITUNG in German 22 Dec 91 p 2

[Report by Claus Pandi: "Our Refugee Waves Are More Dangerous Than Nuclear Weapons"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Vladimir Lyachenko, lieutenant colonel of the Red Army in the "old" Soviet Defense Ministry, described the situation of the Armed Forces in an interview: "The situation is absurd, grotesque, and paradoxical. The military leaders are looking for a new role in the disintegrating USSR and for a solution to the chaos. At present, however, it looks as if this problem could not be solved. For example, a new oath, which is sworn on the president without mentioning his name, was invented. Today it is very difficult to orient oneself."

The social problems are far greater. "The prospects of young officers are not secured in any way. The future of soldiers who served in the Army for 20 or 30 years, and where they are to live and who they are to be paid by are completely unclear. Who will pay us if the Soviet Defense Ministry is liquidated? Along with the family members, millions of people in the USSR are concerned," Lyachenko said.

Lyachenko gave a clear warning to the masters in the Kremlin: "It is nonsense to describe Army members as socially dangerous elements in generalizing accounts. Nobody will simply provoke a conflict. But there certainly are regions where the soldiers are facing a very insecure future. No one knows whether these army members could be stopped by an order if need be.

Referring to the future of the Soviet Armed Forces and the question of whether they will now become a 16th republic, border guards for the entire border of the former union, or whether the officers and soldiers will return to their republics according to their nationality, Lyachenko said: "It has to be feared that there will be a mixture of all three elements, but the people will regret such a compromise."

Lyachenko thinks that concern about the nuclear weapons in the former union republics is exaggerated. "There is a multiple safeguard, which works. The West should be more concerned about the imminent waves of refugees. This is a far more realistic threat."

Local Level Garrison Officers 'Putsch' Denied

PM2312112791 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 21 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

[Report by Colonel A. Oliynik under the "Across the Country" rubric: "A Local Level 'Putsch'"]

[Text] Vladimir—Information has reached various state authorities in Moscow, including the USSR Defense Ministry, through various channels that an officers' meeting was held at the Vladimir Garrison to discuss an upcoming mutiny inspired by none other than Vladimir Oblast Soviet Chairman V. Kalyagin himself. PRIZYV [Rallying Call], an independent newspaper from the oblast, published a report 18 December under the intriguing title "Sunday Evening," which was dedicated to this event.

What actually happened at the Vladimir Garrison 15 December?

"In my view it was a useful meeting," Major General G. Chebanov, oblast military commissar, told me on the telephone. "At the meeting officers armed with facts, as it were, talked about their social protection or rather their defenselessness on the eve of price liberalization. Judge for yourself, there are 792 reserve officers alone on the city's housing waiting list. There are 54 homeless officers at the oblast's military commissariats. The picture in units stationed on the oblasts's territory is just as dismal. But there was no talk of any putsch or mutiny."

Colonel A. Bobrov, who attended the meeting, was even more forthright about it. Oblast Soviet Chairman V. Kalyagin, he said, is really trying to help servicemen with their social protection and in the construction of apartments for the military, and he talked about that at the meeting. That meeting, incidentally, as Anatoliy Vladimirovich said, was attended and addressed by City Administration Head V. Shamov, who also urged the audience to work jointly to resolve the housing problem. So why the local press gave such a peculiar interpretation to this meeting is a mystery."

Indeed, one should not pay attention to this rumor of a "putsch" in Vladimir. Nevertheless, in my view, this incident graphically demonstrates that publications of this kind are nothing other than an attempt to pressure public opinion regarding the military, many of whom are now leading a really bleak existence.

Estonia

Economic, Trade Agreement Ready To Be Signed

LD2412133291 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1000 GMT 19 Dec 91

[Text] The Economics Ministry of Russia has initialled the economic and trade cooperation agreement between the Republic of Estonia and the RSFSR. The agreement is ready to be signed. Aleksander Sikkal, Estonian minister of material resources, told ETA that several stages of talks have been held. The Estonian working groups and our mission in Moscow have completed work in preparing the agreement. Now the place and time for signing must be agreed on. Work is continuing, however, for concluding further economic agreements. Sikkal added that at present talks with Uzbekistan are under way.

Talks Begin on Russian Transport Cooperation

LD2712054691 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1000 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Estonian-Russian talks on transport matters have opened. Our official delegation of the Ministry of Transport and Communications held talks with a working group led by Vitaliy Yefimov, Russian minister of transport, with Lithuanian and Latvian transport leaders present. The talks concerned further cooperation on transport between the four states.

Deputy Minister Enn Sarap explained the key points in the draft protocol. The ownership issue has been resolved in a very favorable manner for Estonia: all the nearly 30 planes so far belonging to the USSR will in the future be entered into the Estonian aviation register. Russia recognizes all our ports as being Estonian territory, and there is a wish on their part to become a shareholder in our grain terminal. The railways are property of the Republic of Estonia; engines are being offered in exchange for our refrigerated railway cars. Russia would like to have only six—if even that—of the 80 seafaring vessels belonging to Estonian Shipping.

Estonian-Russian road traffic will take place without road permits. No final agreement as yet was reached on air space; this will continue to be a subject for talks.

Deputy Minister Sarap noted that talks with the Russian transport leaders began in quite a chauvinistic manner: with references made to a Boris Yeltsin decree, on changing over to hard-currency relations. But as our side did not allow itself to be intimidated by this, the talks continued about mutually profitable cooperation. Preparations toward concluding agreements have begun successfully, Deputy Minister Enn Sarap opined.

Latvia

Government Ends Year Without Budget Deficit

LD2712054991 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1830 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] The first year in independent Latvia is ending without a budget deficit. This pleasant message was announced today at the plenary session of the Supreme Council before deputies broke up for the Christmas recess. However, several amendments were made to the budget, connected with the introduction of a land tax. There was a redistribution of the budgets of those local governments that could make use of the funds, excepting grants for particular purposes. Ten million rubles were allotted for the needs of the republic's Defense Ministry.

At the end of the session in the parliament hall, the Christmas tree was lit up.

Minister of State Gives News Conference

LD2112115791 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1400 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Remarks by Latvian Minister of State Janis Dinevics at a news conference with unidentified correspondents on the signing of a joint Latvian-Belarussian cooperation agreement in Riga on 17 December—recorded]

[Excerpt] A document of political principle, a declaration on good-neighborly relations and their principles, was signed yesterday. Undoubtedly, a significant enough task will follow, and I think this work will begin in the near future. The end of the document stresses that this work must be concluded through a bilateral treaty. The first such joint commission must be convened in about a week on the form these relations will take for us. That commission will discuss borders, delimiting the Latvian-Belarussian border. We have no serious border claims with any state. The idea is that all the relevant documents must be prepared by March so that sometime in March we can set to practical work on this problem. The two sides can first meet in Vitebsk and then probably in Daugavpils, to be practically near the border, which is where we will carry out this border work, after all. Our Belarussian colleagues were very interested in security questions and in point four of this declaration, but our Belarussian colleagues understand security in the sense that the Republic of Belarus will be a strictly neutral state, and it is in their interests, in principle, to have neutral states around them. [passage omitted]

Expected To Sign Trade Treaty With China

OW1712005491 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1747 GMT 16 Dec 91

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Next January, the Latvian-Chinese treaty on trade and economic cooperation is expected to be initialled at

China's embassy in Moscow. The draft treaty was discussed during talks between the two countries' foreign-trade departments.

European Energy Charter Agreed To, Signed

LD2712053691 Riga Radio Riga International in Latvian 2030 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Along with more than 40 other European states, Latvia has signed the European Energy Charter, a document which in fact means the formation of a unified European energy market. The extremely great significance of this document was emphasized by Aivars Millers, minister of industry and energy of the Republic of Latvia.

The parties to the charter have agreed on a unified definition of prices for energy resources, on unified tariffs for the use of these resources, as well as on unified rules for the conveyance of these energy resources through the states' territories. The charter will also regulate cooperation in nuclear energy, environmental protection, and questions of processing new energy resources. It is anticipated also that the signatory states to the charter will assist each other in the (?creation) of energy enterprises and petroleum processing plants. The signatory states to the charter will be entitled to receive economic and technical help. The volume of efforts already in the European states has distributed about 27 million ECU [European Currency Units].

Aivars Millers, minister of industry and energy of Latvia, has said that some of this aid might also be offered to Latvia. He acknowledged that Latvia's inclusion in the international community in this field will help Latvia to solve its problems of energy supply. For example, at the moment, Latvia can only produce about 50 percent of the electrical energy necessary for it. Aivars Millers said that one of the possibilities could be the construction of an atomic electric power station in Latvia with safe Western technology.

Jurkens Speaks Upon Return From Foreign Tour

OW2612023191 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1532 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "One shouldn't be shy to expand relations with Taiwan for the sole reason Communist China may not like it", says Latvia's foreign Minister Janis Jurkens. He was speaking at a news conference in Riga upon his return from a foreign tour, which took him to Singapore, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan.

In Taipei, Latvia and Taiwan exchanged diplomatic notes. Missions will open in both Riga and Taipei. In other words, a change in Latvia's policy towards Taiwan is the issue of the day. IF's [INTERFAX] observer recalls that when Latvia and China signed interstate agreements last September, Riga promised it would avoid establishing diplomatic contacts with Taipei at least in the near future.

In the course of Mr. Jurken's trip it was agreed that experts from Southeast Asian countries and Japan would arrive in Latvia in the near future. Latvia hopes for their assistance in such areas as transport, communications, electronics and computers.

Lithuania

Landsbergis Briefs Journalists on Paris Talks

PM2412152991 Vilnius EKHO LITVY in Russian 11 Dec 91 p 1

[Report by Algirdas Kasperunas: "V. Landsbergis Meetings with Journalists"]

[Text] Chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Council Vytautas Landsbergis in a conversation with journalists which took place on the evening of 9 December described his meetings in France, where he had arrived to sign the Paris Charter, as useful and constructive.

There was an interesting conversation with President Francois Mitterrand and President of the National Assembly Laurent Fabius, in which the processes taking place in the Soviet Union were discussed. There were very useful meetings at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at which the possible difficulties Lithuania may encounter this winter were examined, and questions of economic aid were also discussed in connection with Lithuania's introducing its own currency. Credits from international organizations should not be expected before the coming spring for procedural reasons.

The sides noted that economic cooperation between our two countries is extremely insignificant. It is necessary to stimulate it with short-term credits and corresponding agreements. Lithuania should display greater activity in this matter as well as amending several laws in order to become more attractive to foreign investment.

In general we often had to talk about economic matters with the purpose of creating a certain economic basis on which to successfully go forward, V. Landsbergis noted.

At the meeting with journalists much was said about the treaty signed in Brest on 8 December. The chairman reminded us that Sajudis had mentioned the concept of "commonwealth" as early as two years ago. When talking specifically about the document which the heads of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine signed, the chairman gave it a positive assessment. He described it as an attempt to maintain stability. We will see what will happen in the future. If Russia becomes the successor to the Union structures, and V. Landsbergis is sure that precisely this will happen, Lithuania can only win from this situation, especially as regards resolving the problem of withdrawing Soviet troops from the Baltic countries'

territories. You see even now the situation is such that they can only be withdrawn to Russia, which should be attending to this question.

The birth of an autonomous Ukraine is also to the benefit of Lithuania for similar reasons including strategic ones. In V. Landsbergis's opinion, a strengthened Ukraine and even its control over a certain part of the nuclear potential is better than leaving control with the center, which is becoming who knows what, and it is unclear who is controlling it.

V. Landsbergis is certain that in any case there is a positive process under way. For a long time two views were prominent on conducting reforms in the USSR: 1. The leader or the central authority will provide more freedom; 2. Autonomy is achieved from below. And here some common or central institutions remain which carry out certain functions, but the sovereign states themselves should resolve this.

Vytautas Landsbergis considers that the creation of a defined commonwealth is less dangerous for Lithuania than separately functioning states, especially Russia, within which, in the event of its splitting up, negative political trends connected with the rise of chauvinism could occur.

Landsbergis Responds to Walesa Letter

LD2712051991 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1700 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Report by correspondent Algirdas Usas from the Supreme Council]

[Text] As has been previously reported, Vytautas Landsbergis, the Supreme Council chairman of the Republic of Lithuania, sent on 20 December, a reply to the letter from President Lech Walesa, of the Polish Republic.

Vytautas Landsbergis expressed his conviction that an exchange of letters may serve to remove disagreements, to decrease misunderstandings, or to diminish them. However, in his opinion, both neighboring states have more important problems facing them than those of providing bilateral explanations on in which one of the countries do better legal guarantees of minority rights exist. The most important task that has currently emerged before both countries is the necessity to oppose the increase of tension. There are some forces still in existence who would like to destabilize the situation within this region of Europe, and our task is to tear asunder the weapons that have been (?fashioned) by the joint KGB, CPSU, and (?PZRE) efforts, even if they are painted over in the hues of militant nationalism.

The leader of the Lithuanian parliament stated that he has discerned, from certain parts of Lech Walesa's letter, that the president of the Polish Republic is being misinformed. Vytautas Landsbergis does not perceive any crisis in relations between Lithuania and Poland, but sees only some stubborn attempts to arouse some sort of complication or crisis.

Recalling the meeting at Saint Peter's Basilica, in the Vatican, Vytautas Landsbergis proposed another meeting to the Polish president and extended to him and his family his wishes for a [word indistinct] Holy Christmas and good health in the approaching new year.

Rejects Polish Sejm Proposal

LD2712052491 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1500 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] The Information Bureau of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania has distributed a statement to the press by Vytautas Landsbergis. It notes:

The Christian nationalist Deputies Unity Club of the Polish Sejm has presented a proposal before it, calling for the adoption of a decision concerning the affairs of Lithuania and its citizens who are Polish on a series of demands to be placed before the Republic of Lithuania.

The draft decision, proposed by them, observed Vytautas Landsbergis, is full of groundless accusations. The draft (?authors) give instructions on what another sovereign state should do and how it should do it.

It was not too long ago that the Kremlin addressed Lithuania, using the voice of hegemony. We currently hear this type of tone at meetings of Russian antidemocratic extremist forces. The world has already experienced what is meant by chauvinism and nationalism and, therefore, any form of their expression anywhere gives cause for concern.

Christmas is approaching; it is the feast marking peace, serenity, and goodwill.

Such a proposal to the Polish Sejm is not in keeping with goodneighborly [word indistinct] between two Christian countries. We are certain that the misunderstandings, which are of no use, either to Lithuania or to Poland, arise because of false information. We hope that Poland, who was one of the first to rise up against Communist oppression, will hold its ground against those who are attempting to augment tension and will value, as it has done previously, goodneighborly relations.

European Development Bank To Admit Republic

LD2512105491 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 2000 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Text] The European Reconstruction and Development Bank administrative directors have decided to admit the Republic of Lithuania to the group of states that are members of the European Reconstruction and Development Group, being formed by Ireland and Denmark. Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius was informed of this in a letter from Danish Prime Minister Poul Schluter. At the end of his letter, the Danish prime

minister expresses his belief that the new tie between our nations that is being established through a common group—the European Reconstruction and Development Bank—will encourage warmer relations.

Adviser Comments on Commonwealth Situation

AU2612105491 Budapest NEPSZAVA in Hungarian 20 Dec 91 p 3

[Telephone interview with Albertas Kazaviacis, adviser to the Lithuanian president, by Szerdahelyi in Vilnius; place and date not given: "At Least New Soviet Recruits Are Not Arriving Anymore—Lithuania Is Waiting Again"]

[Text] Since the declaration of the Brest union, hardly any news has come from the Baltics—for understandable reasons. The world is interested in the storms surrounding the new commonwealth and it is not occupied with the future of the three republics that first stepped on the road of independence. However, the Baltics are also interested in the way the union will progress under Boris Yeltsin's leadership. We interviewed Albertas Kazaviacis on this issue.

[Szerdahelyi] News emerged that the Baltic states would also join the new commonwealth. Is there any truth in this?

[Kazaviacis] We have not received any official information on this and I have only learned about it from news agency reports. As far as I remember, the possibility of joining was attributed to the Latvian foreign minister. Naturally, I cannot speak for Riga, but it is certain that Lithuania does not want to become a member of the new community.

[Szerdahelyi] How did Vilnius receive the news of the birth of the new union?

[Kazaviacis] As the situation is extremely complicated, I have to word this very carefully, not only because of the unwritten rules of diplomacy. We welcome all initiatives that serve the economic development of the republics with peaceful means. It is understandable, however, that we would not like to find ourselves in another union forced upon us. At the moment, I cannot judge whether Yeltsin and his people can implement the enormous tasks, but I hope that our relations will be correct and that they will allow the Lithuanians to follow the course they chose for themselves. Our development will slow, however, because of the formation of the commonwealth.

[Szerdahelyi] What do you mean?

[Kazaviacis] I am thinking of the fact that Boris Yeltsin will not spend his time dealing with problems arising from the former relations of the Soviet Union and the Baltics. This can delay for months our negotiations on the practical tasks following the secession. I cannot even exclude the possibility that, in the end, there will not be any "clearing of the accounts" economically, but we will accept the current situation. I do not deny that this would be rather disadvantageous for us because, contrary to Gorbachev's statements, the great friendship meant only losses for us. We have larger problems than this, however. For example, we have not made any progress in the talks on the speed of withdrawing the Soviet Army from our country, although the first deadline relating to this expired on 1 December. The only progress I could report is that new recruits are not arriving in Lithuania anymore, but the old staff is not moving, either.

[Szerdahelyi] Is it possible that there is a danger of a military coup?

[Kazaviacis] I do not think so, although the Soviet Army and its leadership is completely unpredictable today. In my view, however, in any possible conflict now the target would not be the Baltics. Therefore, there is a good side to everything, but God save us from the development of a military conflict because that could involve all of Europe.

Introduction of New Currency Delayed

LD2512104791 Vilnius Radio Vilnius International Service in Lithuanian 2200 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Text] The government press bureau informed Radio Vilnius that the Lithuanian Government does not intend to introduce the national currency in the approaching months. The announcement was made because of the increasing public concern and constant anticipation of the changeover from rubles to litai. According to law, the decision on introducing own currency must be adopted by the Litas Committee, which includes three individuals: the parliament chairman, the prime minister, and the chief of the Bank of Lithuania administration.

Relations Established With Mongolia 13 Dec

LD1312235191 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 2100 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] A joint communique was signed on 13 December at the Lithuanian mission in Moscow on the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Mongolia.

Federation Affairs

Ministry Confirms Yeltsin Has Nuclear Button

PM2712114991 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 27 Dec 91 p 1

[A. Khokhlov report: "On the Button Again"]

[Text] INTERFAX reported yesterday that the "briefcase" containing the nuclear button is still in the possession of the Defense Minister.

At the Defense Ministry it was reported that the information is not authentic. On the evening of 25 December, immediately after the USSR president's resignation statement, the button itself and all the necessary paraphernalia were transferred first by M. Gorbachev to Ye. Shaposhnikov and then by Shaposhnikov to B. Yeltsin.

In a telephone conversation a high-ranking general of the General Staff said that it could not be any other way.

Russia Takes Over Central Intelligence Service

OW2612183691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1727 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The former Central Intelligence Service [CIS] has transfrred to Russia's jurisdiction. On Thursday [26 December], RSFSR President Boris Yeltsin visited the CIS headquarters in Moscow's district of Yasenevo for talks with its chief Dr.Yevgeniy Primakov.

Well-informed sources say Mr. Yeltsin confirmed that the service would continue operating, and that Russia would give it every possible assistance, including social aid for CIS personnel.

Similar agencies are expected to be set up in other sovereign states too, including in Belarus.

Yeltsin Meets With New Service

LD2612183391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1650 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 26 Dec (TASS)—During today's meeting with the leadership of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (RFIS), Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin emphasized that it was necessary to fully use the intelligence service to protect the interests of Russia, to stabilize the international situation, and to avert the development of destructive processes that could undermine the security of the Russian Federation and of other sovereign states of the Commonwealth. Boris Yeltsin's visit to the headquarters of this service was reported to the KRIM-PRESS agency by TASS and the RFIS press bureau. There was a lengthy discussion about the main activities and problems of an intelligence service in modern conditions. The Russian president signed a decree appointing Academician Yevgeniy Primakov, who previously headed the Central USSR Intelligence Service, as the director of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service.

Primakov Named Director

LD2612132491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1256 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Sergey Oleynik]

[Text] Moscow, 26 Dec (TASS)—Yevgeniy Primakov, general director of the Central Intelligence Service (CIS), has changed his all-Union uniform for a Russian one. This is the result of a meeting that has just ended between the leader of the former Union intelligence service and Russian President Boris Yeltsin. Henceforth, this department is to be called Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service (RFIS) [Vneshnyaya Razvedka Rossiyi].

Biography of Yevgeniy Primakov

LD2612201191 Moscow TASS in English 1950 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 26 TASS—Follows a brief biography of Yevgeniy Primakov, who was today appointed the director of Russia's external intelligence service.

Primakov was born on October 29, 1929, in Kiev into the family of employees. [as received] He graduated from the Moscow Institute of Oriental Studies in 1953.

After completing a post-graduate course at Moscow State University in 1956, Primakov worked as a correspondent, desk deputy chief editor and then chief editor at the State Committee for Television and Broadcasting under the USSR Council of Ministers.

In 1962-1970 he was a news analyst, deputy editor and PRAVDA's own correspondent in Arab countries.

In 1970 Primakov changed over to active scientific work. He was appointed deputy director of the USSR Academy of Sciences' Institute of the World Economy and International Relations. He was elected a corresponding member of the Academy in 1974 and academician in 1979.

From 1977 to 1985 Primakov worked as the director of the Soviet Institute of Oriental Studies, and headed the Institute of the World Economy and International Relations in 1985-1989.

In the period of 1989 to 1991 he was the chairman of the Council of the Union of the Soviet parliament and the chairman of the parliamentary group of the USSR, a member of the USSR Presidential Council and a member of the USSR Security Council.

In September 1991 Primakov was appointed the head of the KGB's First Main Directorate and the first deputy

chief of the KGB. From November 6 until today, he worked as director of the USSR Central Intelligence Service.

Yeltsin To Meet Internal Security Officials

LD2712130891 Moscow TASS in English 1230 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 27 TASS—Russian President Boris Yeltsin is meeting officials of the new Russian Interior Ministry on Friday [27 December]. The mass media predicts that the ministry, which was formed by merging the KGB and police, may develop into the notorious NKVD ministry, which served as an instrument of Stalinist repression.

It is Yeltsin's second visit to security agencies. On Thursday [26 December] he told Russian Foreign intelligence officers they have to work to stabilise the international situation in order to avert "destructive processes which can undermine Russian and Commonwealth security", the Russian Foreign Intelligence Agency's press service said on Friday.

Yeltsin also apointed Yevgeniy Primakov director of the Foreign Intelligence Service.

Ministry Rejects Report on File Destruction

LD2612213391 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 26 Dec 91

[From the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] TASS reported today that Russia's Security and Internal Affairs Ministry, which is being set up on the orders of the Russian president, has begun its work by destroying compromising evidence against high-ranking corrupt militia men. The report says that the source of the information is a member of the Russian president's staff.

[Begin recording] [Major General A.N. Karbainov, head of the public relations center of the Interrepublic Security Service] It seems to me that this report is very much a part of all the various recent arguments in the press regarding the merging of KGB and USSR Interior Ministry bodies in accordance with a recent decree of the president of Russia. I want to say that it is untrue for two reasons: First, well, in general, it contradicts the logic of all our work and the logic, shall we say, of the whole history of our development, by which I mean the bodies of state security. And the second reason, which I would say is pragmatic and more down-to- earth, is that the ban against the destruction of documents—any documents—by the state commisssion on the investigation of the part played by KGB bodies in the putsch, still remains in force. For four months now, all documents of any kind—coded ones, plans, or even working operational documents—have been protected.

[Unidentified correspondent] So, the report is entirely untrue?

[Karbainov] Absolutely. [end recording]

Yeltsin TV Address Postponed to 31 Dec

LD2612163391 Berlin ADN in German 1540 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow (ADN)—The television address by Russian President Boris Yeltsin, which was announced for today, has been postponed until the evening of 31 December. According to the Moscow agency NEGA [NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA NEWS AGENCY], Yeltsin intends to highlight the planned decontrol of prices, which is to be implemented at the beginning of the new year.

This morning Moscow Radio had reported that Yeltsin intended to speak to the citizens of the country this evening on Russian Television.

Defense Official on Nuclear, Military Issues

LD2612231491 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Interview with Aleksandr Alekseyevich Kotenkov, deputy chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet's Defense and Security Committee, by correspondent Rasul Mikailov; place and date not given—live or recorded; from the "Russian Parliamentary Herald" program]

[Text] [Mikailov] I have in my hand the text of the agreement on joint measures for nuclear weapons signed by the presidents of four republics—Belarus, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, and the Ukraine. Yesterday, 25 December, this document was ratified by the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation. Undoubtedly, there is no need to persuade anyone of the fact that documents of this sort are of enormous significance not just for the Commonwealth of Independent States, but also for the entire world community. Aleksandr Alekseyevich, you will recall no doubt, the immediate repercussions throughout the world to all of the reports concerning the issue of who would now have his finger on the nuclear button and who would control nuclear weapons in general, and the reports that the country was disintegrating and the republics could lose control of nuclear weapons.

[Kotenkov] Yes, this problem has been a matter of concern to all the world's politicians—and, of course, not just politicians, but, undoubtedly, all sober-minded citizens in all countries of the world. We know this from the recent visit to our country by U.S. Secretary of State Baker. This was one of the central issues he raised in all the republics. Incidentally, it is no coincidence that he first visited all of the republics on whose territory nuclear weapons are deployed. This problem was the focus of attention of the latest session of the Western European Union assembly, which was attended by our

delegation. The whole world was worried about who would control and command nuclear weapons following the USSR's disintegration.

[Mikailov] There was, in fact, a danger here?

[Kotenkov] Yes, indeed. Yes, indeed. There was such a danger, and all these worries were being expressed for good reason, of course. At last we can say that the agreement signed in Alma-Ata and ratified by the Russian parliament yesterday dots all of the i's. We confirmed a document guaranteeing the preservation of unified control over all nuclear weapons. Moreover, I have to say that this agreement is the primary document. Many other documents are to be drafted and signed to elaborate on it. But the most important thing is that the ideology of the actual process has been enshrined in the agreement.

[Mikailov] And its basic priciples?

[Kotenkov] Yes, its basic principles—above all the maintenance of nuclear weapons—all of them, both strategic and tactical—under unified control—and, I wish to stress, under single command. The issue of command is a very controversial one, and during the discussion on this treaty, that is to say agreement, and during its ratification, the question also was raised about who would command nuclear weapons. Command will be carried out from a single center. For now, this center is concentrated in the former Ministry of Defense, but from December 25th, the so-called nuclear button passed into the hands of Russian Federation President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. But this does not mean that he will control this button on his own. What I mean is that he personally will make the decision on whether or not to use nuclear weapons. He will make that decision in coordination with the heads of all the republics that signed the agreement: Kazakhstan, the Ukraine, and Belarus.

[Mikailov] He even has stressed the detail that they are now linked by a special conference line....

[Kotenkov interrupting] They are; that's right!

[Mikailov] ....(?I have heard), which enables them to contact each other.

[Kotenkov] There exists the concept of a conference line, which will link all four presidents, and if it is necessary to hold consultations or to obtain agreement on the use of nuclear weapons, Boris Nikolayevich can indeed, so to speak, contact the presidents of all four republics virtually instantaneously. Generally, this line will be, in a manner of speaking, in the same black briefcase which contains the nuclear button, meaning that the line is with the president at all times. Therefore, the suggestion that this coordination might take a very long time is wrong. Besides, I want to say that we shall develop this agreement by drawing up a whole series of additional agreements, including some which will provide for the possibility of using nuclear weapons in the event of a response to a nuclear strike on our Commonwealth.

[Mikailov] But this principle of no first use of nuclear weapons is enshrined.

[Kotenkov] That is what I am saying: We shall never use nuclear weapons first. But, in the event of a missile attack, a nuclear missile attack on the territory of the Commonwealth we can inflict a retaliatory strike, but this retaliatory strike must be inflicted before the nuclear missiles explode on our territory.

[Mikailov] But, of course.

[Kotenkov] Here we are counting literally in seconds, and it must be regulated by a separate agreement, of course. But, in principle, for now, it is guaranteed that decisions on the use of nuclear weapons will be made by the four presidents with unified command and control [yedinyy kontrol i yedinoye upravleniye].

I also especially would like to talk about tactical nuclear weapons. The point is, in fulfilling the agreement—the initiative of President Bush and President Gorbachev on unilateral....[corrects himself] the mutual initiative on the elimination of tactical nuclear weapons—the parties which signed that agreement reached an understanding that by July 1992 all tactical nuclear weapons would be concentrated on Russian territory, where they would be dismantled, disarmed, and destroyed.

[Mikailov] Aleksandr Alekseyevich, nevertheless, this problem is bound up with great—I would even say immense—material and technical costs. What will Russia's share be, and what will the other republics' share be?

[Kotenkov] I believe that all of the states participating in the Commonwealth will bear the expenditure jointly, for both the maintenance of the combined armed forces and the destruction of nuclear weapons. Of course, it is a very expensive pleasure. Because of our economic potential, based on gross national product, it is natural that the main share, the lion's share, of the expenditure will fall on Russia, but all of the other states must participate in this process as far as they are able. Moreover, I do not believe that we will manage without help from Western countries, because if we want to destroy these weapons as quickly as possible, we will need not only our own technology, but we will have to attract foreign technology. We have offers from the United States and France to provide their most modern technology for destroying nuclear weapons. This will require hard currency, of course. I believe that we will need material assistance here from Western countries.

[Mikailov] And nobody has refused yet?

[Kotenkov] Correct. Nobody has refused yet, but I want to warn now—and this is generally known—that this process will be rather protracted, by virtue of both

economic and technological indices. It will take more than just one year. When studying the issue of the destruction of nuclear weapons at the Ministry of Defense, we are talking about a period of seven or eight years. It simply will be physically impossible for us to do it any earlier.

I would like to mention one more very important feature of this agreement: the republics, principally Belarus and the Ukraine, have undertaken a commitment to join the 1968 nuclear nonproliferation treaty as nonnuclear states. In other words, they are confirming unconditionally their commitment that there will be no nuclear weapons on their territory, and that when the time limit of the treaty reducing strategic weapons expires, there will be no nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus and the Ukraine.

[Mikailov] [words indistinct]

[Kotenkov] This matter has not been settled with Kazakhstan yet. In general, it is believed that such weapons will be kept on the territory of Kazakhstan for the time being, but I believe that this issue will be settled later in a separate agreement.

[Mikailov] Aleksandr Alekseyevich, perhaps we could widen the scope of our discussion and deal with the future of the armed forces in general and the form in which they are to exist now.

[Kotenkov] Yes, this is a vital and most important problem concerning both the country's defense and the very controversial problem of the social protection of servicemen. In general, the psychological climate in the armed forces at the moment is one of mistrust on the part of officers, uncertainty about whom they owe their allegiance to, what their social security guarantees are, and so on. This issue is the focus of attention not just of the Ministry of Defense. Let me say that the Ministry of Defense, headed by Marshal of Aviation Yevgeniy Ivanovich Shaposhnikov, is very active in this area. But, it is not just a matter for the Ministry of Defense. It is, above all, a matter for the parliamentary bodies.

[Mikailov] Including the committee...

[Kotenkov, interrupting] Yes, our committee in particular. Quite recently, before the Union Supreme Soviet was abolished, I worked in that body, in the Security and Defense Committee of the Soviet of the Republics, and within that committee we embarked on very substantial interrepublican—and now one can say interstate—work to draft a treaty on a defense union or a military-political union. Before the Union Supreme Soviet was abolished, we managed to prepare a draft agreement of the independent states on defense matters for the transitional period. The main point of the document is to guaranteee stability in the armed forces, both inside and around them, for the transitional period while army reform, including the creation of the republics' own armed forces within the republics, proceeds. Representatives of all 12 states of the former Union, except for the Baltic states, worked on the agreement. It was signed by representatives of all these states. I believe that the agreement now will be an integral part of the package of documents being prepared for signing at the meeting in Minsk.

The principal document being prepared of course is the treaty on joint defense by the Commonwealth of Independent States. Its name perhaps has been changed, but that is the working name for the time being. The treaty—as I said—above all provides social guarantees for servicemen, members of their families, and Ministry of Defense pensioners, irrespective of what territory they are on. In other words, officers, warrant officers, soldiers and their faimilies, and former servicemen now on pension, can be certain that, whatever territory they remain on, they will retain their social guarantees. Moreover, we are raising the issue of the need for a unified system of social guarantees. In other words, we must not find ourselves in a situation whereby pensions in the Ukraine are higher than on Russian territory, or in Russia officers get better cash allowances than in Uzbekistan. This would spark large-scale emigration. People would face the choice of where it is best to serve, whom to serve, and so on. This could give rise to a race in social guarantees. You will remember that we used to have a tax race, with competition to reduce taxes as much as possible. Here, on the other hand, it will be a question of who pays more to attract officers to their side, and so on. This must not happen.

And there are as yet no objections to the idea that social guarantees for servicemen must be equal and coordinated throughout the territory of all the Commonwealth states.

[Mikailov] I have heard that the partial transfer of the Army to contracts is being planned for the future.

[Kotenkov] Yes, this is one of the most important aspects of military reform, which is to be implemented irrespective of how the treaty process on the future of the armed forces proceeds. Starting from 1992, up to 30 percent—these are the provisional figures—of the personnel of (?military districts) will be transferred to contracts. The question of where and how citizens called up from the territory of a sovereign republic are going to do their military service is a very controversial one. We are interested first and foremost in citizens of Russia. I would like to recall that more than a year ago the Russian Supreme Soviet, and then the Congess of People's Deputies, adopted a decision that it was unacceptable to use citizens of the RSFSR to resolve any interethnic conflicts outside Russian territory. We spent a whole year trying to get this decision observed. Regrettably, until power was transferred fully to the Russian parliament and the Russian president, we could not resolve this matter. I can now assure our citizens that the process has started.

Speaking at the ratification of the agreement on nuclear weapons yesterday, Boris Nikolayevich announced that the withdrawal of one of the internal troops regiments in Nagorno-Karabakh was completed on 25 December.

Today, 26 December, the withdrawal of a second regiment should be completed. This process is underway, and I believe that all of the troops will be pulled out from there in the near future.

[Mikailov] But, on the other hand, those who sign a contract would be able to go to those areas?

[Kotenkov] This is a very controversial question. As regards people who want to serve in such distant parts outside the territory of their republic and the question of where they can serve, for the time being we have the former Union legislation. We have the law on general military service and every citizen is obliged to comply with it. But, as far as the transfer to contracts is concerned, I believe that if we switch up to 30 percent of personnel to contracts every year, we could complete the full transition of the armed forces to contracts in three or four years. And this would enable servicemen, citizens of Russia called up on Russian territory, to sign a contract and go where they are sent. In other words, people go out there by choice, on what is effectively a voluntary basis, and for money.

[Mikailov] So there is a contract and it is voluntary?

[Kotenkov] Yes, it is a voluntary thing. If a person has signed such a contract, he is obliged to abide by it. Until we switch fully to contracts, we will retain the principle of universal military service, and every citizen who takes the oath must serve where he is sent.

Rutskoy: Reforms 'Another Giant Experiment'

OW2612154891 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1330 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Russian Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy has called the reforms planned by the government of the republic "another giant experiment on the country." Speaking at a Moscow news conference on Thursday [26 December] he stressed that a market economy can be introduced only in a law-governed democratic state. "Now there is neither government, nor democracy in Russia, and if there is anarchy in the country, this can lead to unpredictable consequences," he said. Rutskoy said that people have been driven to such a state that they will not forgive another failure. In his opinion one can hardly expect that Russia will start getting out of the crisis in the middle of 1992. The vice-president quoted forecasts of Soviet and foreign experts predicting a complete collapse of production in 1993.

Rutskoy described as one of the main reasons for Russia's sliding to catastrophe the lack of concerted actions of the Russian parliament and government. "If they fail to reach agreement within the next month, one can expect any turn of events," he said.

Speaking of the presidential decree of December 19 limiting the powers of the Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy wondered how Yeltsin could sign it as he was in Rome. In his opinion Yeltsin had nothing to do with the decree. "The man who actually wrote it is Gennadiy Burbulis," Rutskoy said. As a result of the decree, he said, the government becomes absolutely uncontrollable in its actions. He reaffirmed that he does not intend to resign.

Further Rutskoy Criticism

PM2712143391 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 27 Dec 91 p 1

[I. Chernyak report under "No Comment" rubric: "Rutskoy Refutes Rumor That Yeltsin, Burbulis Are Not Speaking to Him"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] **...and on Internal Affairs**

[Russian Vice President] Rutskoy does not intend to hand in his resignation. But this does not stop the vice president from claiming that there is neither authority nor democracy in the country. He read an extract from an article by V. Maksimov which says that a dictatorship has already been established in our country—the loathsome dictatorship of the street. The introduction of the market, in Rutskoy's opinion, is possible only within the framework of order.

On the question of the Army, Rutskoy said: "This grieves me: In 1984 Russia was a great power and its Army was a factor of world stability. Since the beginning of so-called perestroyka things have disintegrated. We have reached the stage where officers go around in civilian clothes in Moscow to avoid being beaten up." According to Rutskoy's information, a few years ago there were 282,000 homeless officers and NCOs, now that figure is 1.5 million; and the Baltic and East Europe forces are still to come. He merely smiled when he recalled [Russian President] Yeltsin's decree doubling servicemen's pay: Prices will rocket to five times their present level! "This is not a reform of the Army!" Rutskoy summed up.

Commenting on Yeltsin's decision to "take" five committees, which the vice president controlled, from him, Rutskoy noted: "The decision is dated 19 December, when Boris Nikolayevich was in Italy. How could he sign it?" In his opinion, the decision was made in order to remove the organs of power from control. "And it was all done behind people's backs, on the quiet. If I had been in the place of those people, I would at least have invited the man to the meeting [Yesli by ya byl na meste etikh rebyat, ya by khot priglasil cheloveka na zasedaniye]."

What will the vice president do next? "I shall go to see Boris Nikolayevich. I do not think that he has anything to do with this. If they take everything away, I shall act according to the Constitution—that is, I shall do the president's bidding." Rutskoy refuted rumors that Yeltsin and Burbulis are not talking to him.

Rutskoy called the decision to merge the militia and the state security service absurd. "Although there have been more drastic decisions—for example, on the amalgamation of 15 former ministries into a single industry ministry. But that is not the point. Look at the root of the problem—why is crime on the increase? Because people cannot buy what they need. I, the vice president, cannot afford an iron: They cost 4,000 rubles [R] each. Even if they created the NKVD [People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs] here it would not help. There must be an authority—today there is none."

Who is to blame? Rutskoy considers the culprits to be both the former and the present leaderships. He stressed that people should not pin their hopes on the present—the "third democratic"—government, that this time it is not answerable.

When will this end? "In any event let there be no farfetched expectations that we will begin to emerge from the crisis in mid-1992. We have an incomprehensible country—a country of banks, commodity exchanges, and presidents. Soon, I am sure, they will elect their own president in Moscow's Oktyabrskiy Rayon, and then in Petushki too. Whereas before perestroyka several million people lived below the poverty line, now there are more than 100 million. From 1 January that figure will be even higher. The subsistence minimum—R342—was picked at random, but at the same time it has not been forgotten that the chairman of the Supreme Soviet is to receive 21 times the subsistence minimum. Try putting yourself in the place of someone who gets R342—enough for just 1.5 kg of meat!" "This is not a reform—this is just another gigantic experiment using Russia. But I believe that the time of great experiments on an entire people is soon coming to an end," Rutskoy concluded.

Government Approves 1992 Privatization Program

OW2612210491 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2000 GMT 26 Dec 91

[From "Bulletin 4"—transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] At its Thursday [26 December] meeting chaired by President Boris Yeltsin, the Russian Government approved next year's privatization program which, according to Science Minister Boris Saltykov, lists a) objects not to be privatized at all; b) objects to be transferred into private hands by government decree; and c) objects slated for unconditional privatization.

The first group includes land with its mineral resources, national air space, the continental shelf, the territorial waters, banks, air- and railroad companies, etc.

The second includes pharmaceutical plants, babyfood factories, wine and tobacco manufacturing enterprises, some construction agencies, educational institutions, etc. The privatization of public amenities and city transport will be entrusted to municipal authorities.

The third group embraces small-sized enterprises, such as shops, etc.

The program sets special conditions for the involvement of foreigners in the privatization campaign. Specifically, it offers foreign entrepreneurs a number of benefits for privatizing unprofitable or mothballed enterprises, or unfinished construction sites. Shops and small ateliers will be auctioned off to foreign and domestic buyers on equal terms.

Mr. Saltykov indicated that the privatization of Russia's economy would take 3 to 5 years to complete. Next year's proceeds should be expected to amount to 92 billion rubles. In 1993 they could exceed the 300-billion mark.

Further on Privatization Program

LD2612224891 Moscow TASS in English 2213 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondents Ivan Ivanov and Gennadiy Talalayev]

[Text] Moscow December 26 TASS—"A privatisation campaign should be launched already now that the liberalisation of prices begins," Boris Saltykov, Russia's minister of science, high education and technical policy, told journalists in comment on today's meeting of the Government of Russia, which dealt mainly with the discussion of a 1992 state programme for privatisation.

The document is expected to be made public in the coming days in the form of a republican law or a decree issued by the president of Russia.

"The Russian Government expects to get a revenue of 92 billion roubles from privatisation in 1992 and about 300 billion roubles in 1993," Saltykov said.

The programme introduces the differentiation of facilities subject to privatisation with due regard for their importance to the state.

Such facilities as shops and public catering establishments are subject to absolute and immediate privatisation beginning from January 2.

In 1992, it is banned to privatise mineral resources, forests, large water reservoirs, the coastal shelf, banks and similar institutions to handle monetary turnover, the hydrometeoservice, railway, air and pipeline transport, common utility motor roads, mobilisation stores, and other facilities.

By a special resolution of the Russian Government, pharmaceutical enterprises and those producing baby foods, facilities of the alcohol, liqueur, vodka and tobacco producing industries, state-run sanatoria and health resorts, higher learning establishments and research institutes may be privatised next year.

Touching upon the discussion of a draft state investment programme of Russia for 1992, Saltykov said that state

investments will somewhat increase only in housing construction whereas all the other capital investments, particularly in the first quarter of the year, are to diminish.

Those present at the news conference were told that as of December 26 Russia had been recognised by 40 states, including 12 European Community countries, a number of Oriental countries as well as by Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Lithuania.

Rule of Law Concerns Constitutional Court

OW2612192791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1521 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Participants in a Thursday [26 December] meeting of the Russian Constitutional Court expressed deep concern about the state of lawfulness in the country, as well as activities of both legislative and executive bodies." [no opening quotation marks as received] The judges are especially concerned over amendments made to the law on the press, the presidential decree merging the Interior Ministry and the Security Service, the state of economic reform's legal basis, particularly concerning privatization, and procedures of renaming the state.

Members of the Constitutional Court stated that they would by no means hamper reform process and stressed that any changes in the state's life, even the most favorable ones, must be carried out within the framework of laws. "The Russian Constitutional Court have no intention of repeating the sad fate of the USSR Constitutional Supervision Committee and, being the supreme court body, will take steps to protect the constitutional regime in the country and to prevent dictatorship and arbitrary [as received] wherever they may come from," a report of the Russian Constitutional Court press service points out.

Violation of Constitution Charged

OW2612210891 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2000 GMT 26 Dec 91

[From "Bulletin 4"—transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The RSFSR Constitutional Court has accused the republican legislative and executive authorities of "openly ignoring the Constitution."

Chairman Valeriy Zorkin told journalists after a regular meeting of the court on Thursday [26 December] that the accusation referred to President Yeltsin's decree on the merger of the Interior Ministry and the security service, the parliamentary amendments to the Law on the Press, and the procedure for the renaming of the RSFSR approved by parliament.

Mr. Zorkin said the Constitutional Court would take number of cases of suspected violation of the Constitution by Russia's top administration.

Trade Unions Chief Declares Strike Moratorium

LD2612135691 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] The RIA agency reports that Igor Klochkov, chairman of the Federation of Russian Independent Trade Unions, has declared a four-month moratorium on strikes. He stated that an agreement on social partnership between the government, business circles, and trade unions, which is being formulated now, should be in force until 1 May. Trade unions will define their position at that time.

Russia To Sell Anti-Aircraft Artillery

LD2712074591 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 2238 GMT 26 Dec 91

[From the "Military News" section]

[Text] According to some data, Russia is to sell Tunguska anti-aircraft artillery and missile complex abroad. Until recently the existence of Tunguska Complex was kept secret. This weapon is designed for anti-aircraft protection of general-purpose units on the move or in mobile formation from attacks of low-level-flying attacking aircraft, primarily helicopter gunships. The complex is designed to engage the aircraft before they reach the firing range of their on-board weapons and is able to fire both its artillery and missile weapons. A similar purpose US-Swiss Adats artillery and missile complex is still under testing and will not be available until 1993.

According to the estimates of the Anti-Aircraft Defense General Headquarters, about 1.5 billion rubles will be required to maintain the anti-aircraft defense of the RSFSR.

Zhirinovskiy's Party Said 'CPSU Subsidiary'

LD2612132391 Moscow TASS in English 2019 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 25 TASS—The Liberal-Democratic Party (LDP), headed by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, does not exist in reality, as false lists of members were handed to the Soviet Justice Ministry during the registration of the new party, a Russian parliamentary expert told a press conference on Wednesday [25 December].

Aleksandr Kichikhin, an expert of the Russian parliamentary commission investigating the circumstances of the August failed coup, criticised the Central Election Board for registering Zhirinovskiy as a candidate to the post of Russian President without checking his credentials. Six million Russian voters supported Zhirinovskiy at the presidential elections last June.

The LDP leader illegally financed his own preelection campaign, Kichikhin claimed, adding that Zhirinovskiy can be sued for fraud, material damage and instigating ethnic strife.

The now banned Soviet Communist Party was financing LDP activities, and sponsored riot police units to protect Zhirinovskiy in his trips, Kichikhin said. Zhirinovskiy was an acquaintance of former KGB chief Vladimir Kryuchkov, now detained as a main August coup plotter, the expert stated. KGB officers were the first to meet Zhirinovskiy and help him in his tours of the country, he added.

Kichikhin, a KGB colonel fired last August, claimed LDP is not an independent political party, but a CPSU subsidiary.

The expert said LDP must be banned according to the Russian presidential decree prohibiting the activities of the CPSU and its structures.

International Affairs

Foreign Minister Comments on Expanding Contacts

LD2512222791 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Correspondent A. Poklad report from the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] Here is some diplomatic news. I think that many people in our country and abroad are worried about the international status of Russia and other states—former members of our Union—and how the process of their recognition is proceeding.

[Poklad] Andrey Kozyrev, the Russian minister of foreign affairs, noted today that many foreign governments regard the Russian Federation as a successor to the Soviet Union, and this means the automatic international diplomatic recognition of Russia. Russia's foreign policy will not be so ideologized as the Soviet. It will be based on values common to all mankind, and above all on the protection of human rights. Kozyrev said this while speaking at a ceremony for handing over diplomas to the prize-winners of the Ilya Krichevskiy competition for the best foreign political concept.

Today the Russian foreign minister also received leaders of the Cuban opposition. Contacts are being established in connection with the process of democratization in Cuba and they promise to be mutually beneficial. Already the Cubans now residing in the United States can offer us as much sugar as Cuba, but at half the price.

[Begin Kozyrev recording] Of course, we recognize the existing governments in power; at the same time, however, we will expand the circle of our contacts so as not to find ourselves in the situation in which Eastern Europe found itself when the communist regimes collapsed and our embassies and our Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not have contacts even with Walesa. [end recording]

Further on Remarks

OW2612022991 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1730 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev stated that the question of Russia's international recognition had not been raised. "We are recognized as the Soviet Union's successor", he said speaking at the prize-rewarding ceremony of the Ilya Krichevskiy competition on Russian foreign policy top priorities.

Andrey Kozyrev stressed that foreign policy should serve the interests of the Russian people. "It is necessary to protect the interests and rights of our compatriots both for abroad and in republics of the former Soviet Union," he noted.

Mr. Kozyrev confirmed the republican government's policy of closer relations with NATO and other international organizations.

Letter on Russian Membership Delivered to UN

LD2412233491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2245 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] United Nations, 25 Dec (TASS)—The text of Russian President Boris Yeltsin's letter on Russia continuing the USSR's membership in the United Nations was handed in at the United Nations on Tuesday [24 December] evening. Ambassador Yuliy Vorontsov, who henceforth becomes the permanent representative of the Russian Federation at the United Nations, presented the letter, which was addressed to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar. Henceforth the name of the Russian Federation will be used in the United Nations in place of the name: USSR.

After presenting the letter, Yu.M. Vorontsov answered journalists' questions, announcing that he had already told Javier Perez de Cuellar, the UN secretary general, who was now ill, about the content of this document by telephone. "I handed the text of the letter to Virendra Dayal, the chief of his office," the diplomat said.

It is a question of Russia continuing the USSR's membership in the United Nations, the permanent representative of Russia to the United Nations continued. And there is no need for any UN body to ratify it. "As a preliminary measure, we held consultations on this question with members of the Security Council and received complete support and understanding from the majority, especially from the permanent members. We have not yet consulted with all the members of the Council, but we plan to do so in the near future," he explained. There

was a general understanding that if membership was continued, no actions by the Security Council would be required.

Yu.M. Vorontsov expressed the opinion that it would not be necessary to amend the UN Charter. Here he cited the precedent of 1971 when the PRC started to represent China at the United Nations instead of Taiwan. "No amendments to the Charter were made then," he stressed.

The diplomat expressed perplexity at a question from one of the journalists who asserted that the USSR's chair at the Security Council might be claimed from Russia by Germany, Japan, India, or Brazil. "We are not aware that anyone has put forward such claims. No one has informed us of this officially.... I simply do not understand what is in question," he said. At the same time, Yu.M. Vorontsov did not rule out that eventually the question of Germany's or Japan's permanent membership of the Security Council might be examined. "Only not now, but in the future," he explained.

The permanent representative of Russia at the United Nations expressed confidence that all the former Soviet Republics, now already independent states, would become UN members. "I think they will submit documents in the near future. And possibly by February or March 1992 at the resumed 46th session of the UN General Assembly we will witness their joining the United Nations. The Russian Federation will fully support them and will provide the necessary assistance." In this connection, Yu.M. Vorontsov recalled that the Soviet Union had from 1944 been advocating that all the republics, including the Russian Federation, should be in the United Nations.

Yu.M. Vorontsov again stressed that Russia was taking upon itself all the financial obligations of the former USSR toward the United Nations. When the other states that previously formed part of the USSR join, their financial obligations will be examined separately, he added.

Flag Presented

LD2512101891 Moscow TASS in English 0949 GMT 25 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondents Mikhail Kochetkov and Yevgeniy Menkes]

[Text] United Nations December 25 (TASS)—The Russian Federation continued Soviet membership at the United Nations from the night of December 24. The text of an appropriate letter from Russia's President Boris Yeltsin to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar was delivered to the U.N. Secretariat on Tuesday [24 Tuesday].

The document was handed over by Yuliy Vorontsov, permanent representative of the USSR at the United Nations, who from that moment became the permanent representative of the Russian Federation at the United Nations.

A tricolour flag of Russia was also handed over, to be hoisted in front of the building of the U.N. Headquarters. The letter informed the U.N. Secretary-General that "the membership of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics at the United Nations, including that in the Security Council and in all other agencies and organisations of the United Nations system is continued with the support of the states of the Commonwealth of Independent States by the Russian Federation".

"In this connection please use in the United Nations the name of the Russian Federation in place of the name of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," the president of Russia pointed out.

"The Russian Federation remains responsible in full for all the rights and obligations of the USSR under the United Nations Charter, including the financial obligations.

"Please accept this letter as constituting credentials to represent the Russian Federation for all persons currently possessing the credentials of the representatives of the USSR to the United Nations," Yeltsin pointed out in conclusion.

'Mistake' Distorts Meaning of Yeltsin Address

LD2612184391 Moscow TASS in English 1644 GMT 26 Dec 91

[The TASS report mentioned in the following item was published in the 20 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT on page 39 entitled: "Yeltsin NATO Membership Appeal Circulated"]

[Text] Moscow December 26 TASS—According to several newspapers, TASS made a mistake in a report on December 20. The mistake distorted the meaning of Russian President Boris Yeltsin's address to the North Atlantic Cooperation Council session.

Some newspapers, ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA among them, say TASS made a mistake in the phrase "today we are not raising the question of Russia's membership in NATO, but we are ready to regard it as a long-term political aim."

Like all other agencies who used the official text of the document in their reports, TASS missed the negative particle "not", thus corrupting the sense of the report.

The TASS correspondent in Brussels faxed the official text of the address which was distributed in Brussels and which bears the same mistake.

To clarify the situation TASS met with Andrey Shkurko, aide to the Russian foreign minister, who said the original address did not bear the mistake and it should be explained by technical reasons.

A corrected version of Russian President Boris Yeltsin's address to the December 20 NATO Cooperation Council session in Brussels follows.

Address to North Atlantic Cooperation Council session participants Brussels December 20 1991

On behalf of Russian leadership I would like to greet the participants of the first session of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and to express my confidence that the work of this new body of international affinity will help create the atmosphere of mutual understanding and trust, to strengthen stability and security on the European continent.

The development of these processes is facilitated by deep changes in our country which open up unprecedented possibilities for Russia to cooperate with the outside world. These relations may now rely on recognising the common values and jointly envisioning ways to promote the international security. From this standpoint we consider the prospects for our relations with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

We regard these relations seriously and would like to develop the dialogue and contacts with the North Atlantic Treaty both on the political and military levels. Today we are not raising the question of Russia's membership in NATO, but we are ready to regard it as a long-term political aim.

Russian leadership views positively the results of the Rome North Atlantic Council session and the decisions taken there. We totally support the efforts to build a new security system "from Vancouver to Vladivostok". It is important now to overcome rapidly the consequences of confrontation and to implement decisive measures on reciprocal military reductions, at the same time increasing mutual understanding and predictability.

Russia and the other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States which is being formed at present intend to pursue a policy of strengthening world peace and security. They guarantee their strict observance of all the international obligations stemming from treaties and agreements of the former USSR. Particular attention will be given to joint control over the nuclear weapons and its non- proliferation. All this, in our view, will create conditions to form a reliable European security system with all the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States participating, as well as, naturally, the USA and Canada.

We believe Russia, like other Commonwealth member-states, will contribute considerably to the work of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and is prepared to take part in its subsequent sessions.

[Signed] President of the Russian Federation Boris Yeltsin

Federation Recognized by 40 Countries

OW2612195491 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1727 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] By today, 40 states, including Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Hungary, Egypt, 12 E.C. countries (among them Germany, France, Italy), Iran, Canada, Cyprus, China, North Korea, Cuba, Mongolia, Norway, Pakistan, Romania, USA, Turkey, Switzerland and Sweden have announced their recognition of the Russian Federation.

Of the former Union republics Armenia, Kazakhstan and Lithuania have recognized the independence of Russia.

The leader of the Palestine Liberation Oranization Yasir 'Arafat has also made a statenent recognizing Russia's independence.

Bush Call to Yeltsin on Recognition Reported

PM2412175091 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Dec 91 Union Edition p 5

[Report by correspondent A. Blinov: "The United States Confirms that Russia Will Take the USSR's Place in the UN Security Council"]

[Text] Washington—The United States will very soon announce full recognition of Russia and a number of other republics of the former USSR. This is the result of a telephone conversation between Russian President B.N. Yeltsin and U.S. President G. Bush on 23 December.

Before flying to his out-of-town residence, Camp David, where he will spend three days of the Christmas holiday, G. Bush told journalists only that he had had a "long" telephone conversation with B.N. Yeltsin. Further explanation was provided by his press secretary, M. Fitzwater. According to him, the conversation lasted around 30 minutes and concerned the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the question of recognition of the independence of the republics of the former USSR.

According to the White House press secretary, the U.S. President congratulated the Russian president and through him the presidents of the other republics on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. He also stressed the U.S. readiness to continue to give humanitarian aid to the republics.

The U.S. President also said that he was discussing steps in the direction of recognition of Russia and other states of the former USSR with Secretary of State J. Baker and was consulting with the allies. The matter "will be resolved soon," the White House press secretary noted.

In the very near future—most likely on 26 December, but, at any rate, before the end of the week—Washington

will announce its recognition of the independence of 11 republics of the former USSR. At the same time, full diplomatic recognition will be granted to approximately half of them. This means above all Russia and, administration representatives say, the Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstyan, and Armenia.

Full diplomatic recognition presupposes the sending of ambassadors and other steps to establish comprehensive relations. As is known, hitherto the United States has granted full diplomatic recognition only to the three Baltic republics which seceded from the USSR. The current U.S. ambassador in Moscow, R. Strauss, will be the ambassador to Russia.

As for when the other republics are to be given diplomatic recognition, that will depend on how far their policies correspond to the criteria formulated by U.S. Secretary of State J. Baker in September. These criteria, sometimes called "Baker's five principles," include dedication to democracy, observance of international treaties, and respect for the rights of individuals and minorities.

U.S. administration officials said that Washington intends to call for the USSR's place as a permanent member of the Security Council to be given to Russia and for the admission to the United Nations of those republics of the former Union that are not members of this universal international organization.

From the U.S. viewpoint, there is no automatic guarantee that the USSR's place on the Security Council will go to Russia, since there is no precedent as far as this kind of substitution is concerned. At the same time, the U.S. Administration itself believes that in this case Russia should be seen as the "continuation" of the Soviet Union, that is, the successor state, by analogy, say, with the situation where, following the division of India into two parts, one of them—India proper—was regarded as the "continuation" of the previous state, while the other (Pakistan) was seen as a new state entity.

Bush To Meet With Yeltsin; Cited on Arms

LD2712093191 Moscow TASS in English 0846 GMT 27 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Andrey Fedyashin]

[Text] Washington December 27 TASS—President Bush said here on Thursday [26 December] that he would like to meet Russian President Boris Yeltsin, but the date has not yet been fixed. He also said he was satisfied with the assurances made by leaders of the four former Soviet republics, on the territories of which nuclear weapons are now deployed, and that U.S. experts see no reasons for any anxiety about the former USSR's nuclear arsenal.

Addressing a press conference in the White House on Thursday, Bush said that, in his opinion, it would be easier for the United States now than before to conduct talks with separate republics on the reduction of nuclear weapons, because they no longer regarded the United States as an enemy, as they did during the "Cold War".

Representative to U.S. Comments on Role, Ties

92UF0369A Moscow TRUD in Russian 13 Dec 91 p 3

[Interview with Andrey Kolosovskiy, special Russian representative to the United States, conducted by correspondent V. Sisnev: "Andrey Kolosovskiy: Russia's Prestige Has Grown"]

[Text] Washington—Andrey Igorevich Kolosovskiy, recent deputy foreign minister of the RSFSR, has by a decree of B. Yeltsin been appointed RSFSR special plenipotentiary representative in the United States. It is as such that he is being received in Washington by the administration, although he is formally ranked as one of three minister-counselors of the Soviet Embassy. He is 35 years of age, his wife is a physician, and he has a three-year-old son, but the latter are still in Moscow. He himself is establishing contacts in Washington where he has not previously worked on a permanent assignment and has been here for only six months of practical experience. The day the emergence of a Commonwealth of Independent States became known, the special plenipotentiary representative of the RSFSR paid a visit to the White House. It was with a question about this that our interview began.

[Sisnev] Your minister recently told me that the Russian Government had no secrets from the people. If this is so, please tell us with whom you talked in the White House and about what. It has been rumored that you handed President Bush a message from Yeltsin on the Commonwealth.

[Kolosovskiy] No, I did not hand over a message. It was agreed that Belarus would notify the U.S. Government officially of the fact of the creation of the Commonwealth. Its representative at the United Nations came to Washington for this purpose and met with Secretary of State Baker. I was, indeed, in the White House, but not with the President but with his assistant for Soviet problems, Ed Hewitt. They still did not have the documents signed in Minsk, and I presented Hewitt with all three texts. Prior to this, I had had a telephone conversation with Minister A.V. Kozyrev and I was able to provide the necessary explanations. We requested that the ongoing events be analyzed from the viewpoint of the fact that they are proceeding in the channel of democratic transformations and that a formula for relations between the republics had been found. And that this be understood and recognized as a new reality.

[Sisnev] And what was the reaction?

[Kolosovskiy] It comes down to two things. Among those who deal permanently with our affairs it is understood that this is a logical step. Simultaneously one senses great cautiousness and a desire to learn as much and as precisely as possible about how all this will look. And a manifest reluctance to interfere or take sides in the

discussion which is underway between the three republics and Gorbachev. So a clear official response is being deferred—until Baker's visit, possibly. You were present at the speech of Robert Strauss, the American ambassador to our country. His speech was also, I would say, an integral part of the official response. Initially he voiced concern about what was happening with us and then began to show that America should follow the example of Germany and France and decisively assist Russia in overcoming the difficult period and that businessmen should go to the Russian market and work there.

[Sisnev] But his joke is very indicative: "If I had $100,000, I would invest it all in Russia and try to obtain $10 million. And if I had $10 million, I would still invest only $100,000."

[Kolosovskiy] The Americans are afraid of any surprise development. They are particularly concerned with regard to our nuclear weapons: Who has the actual "black suitcase," whose finger is on the nuclear button, who could press it? And, of course, many people have a vision of the Yugoslav nightmare: Will not the same happen with us? And they are being intimidated almost daily here with "civil war," "catastrophe," and so forth. This looks like deliberate intimidation on the part of the West and, to speak of the internal aspect, incitement to a certain extent. Such apocalyptic predictions, without an indication of a solution, what is more, do not help, but only hinder matters, of course.

[Sisnev] What do you think? Do the Americans take these prophesies seriously or do they, for all that, understand that these are some political games?

[Kolosovskiy] It varies. Let us be objective. The habit of dealing with Gorbachev and his people is ingrained in them, and the reserve of trust in them is not exhausted. But this, it seems to me, is what is changing with every day that goes by: People here are beginning to see increasingly clearly that the Minsk accord is what is needed. After all, everyone was horrified: Oh, Ukraine is breaking away, how can life go on?! Mikhail Sergeyevich reiterated continually that he could not imagine a future without the Ukraine. And here it is on the table—a decision whereby the Ukraine on the one hand complies with the wishes of its people and secures independence; on the other, it preserves relations both with Russia and the other peoples. Why the need for panic, one wonders? And all is being done by way of negotiations in a normal civilized manner, not at all as in 1917. It is necessary simply to support this, not predict "seas of blood" and not take fright ahead of time in expectation of them. This is roughly what I told the Americans.

[Sisnev] And the final question. Minister Kozyrev told me that his main perception following his visit here was that the credit of political trust in the Russian Government was quite high. What about now, following the event in Minsk, which came as a surprise to Washington?

[Kolosovskiy] There is a slight "negative," perhaps in connection with this surprise itself inasmuch as the Americans are very fond of certainty and clarity. But, as a whole, the authority of Russia and its prestige have undoubtedly risen. Washington has seen for itself once again the scale of the political thinking of the Russian leadership.

Rutskoy Reports on Near East Visit, POWs

LD2612135791 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1200 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Report by correspondent D. Malyshev from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Russia has turned its face to the Near East. While Boris Yeltsin was discovering for himself the countries of Western Europe, Aleksandr Rutskoy was visiting Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. As head of a government delegation, he visited countries in which he fought during the Afghan war and where he was taken prisoner. That is why one of the main topics was the question of the release of prisoners of war.

At today's news conference, Aleksandr Rutskoy reported that the mujahidin handed over to him a list of 56 prisoners of war, 14 of whom are definitely still alive. The mujahidin leaders promised to release three of them in the near future. A meeting was held with two prisoners who, after hearing romanticized stories about the Afghan war, and who were under 18 at the time, decided to set off for Afghanistan, where they were taken prisoner. Information about them will be conveyed to their parents. The question of their extradition will be decided.

As for the prisoner of war who was handed over during Rutskoy's visit, following a conversation with him it was learned that he is an Afghan citizen. He was captured following the withdrawal of the Soviet troops, after which he was handed over to the International Red Cross.

Najibollah has decided to release 100 mujahidin prisoners of war.

During Rutskoy's visit, the end of military aid by our country to Afghanistan, and everything we have been reproached for over all these years, also came about. Rutskoy expressed the hope that the Afghan problem would now be solved much more quickly. Naturally, questions were asked at the news conference that were not relative to the visit, such as questions about Rutskoy's appraisal of the Alma-Ata agreement and about the processes occurring in Chechen- Ingush. I remind you that Rutskoy was one of the initiators of the signing of a presidential decree on the introduction of a state of emergency there. Perhaps the question repeated most often is whether Rutskoy intends to resign.

[Begin Rutskoy recording] I did not and do not intend to resign. [end recording]

He added that as vice president of Russia, he was elected by all the people and does not wish to disappoint his electorate.

Tour 'Useful and Constructive'

LD2612213491 Moscow TASS in English 1943 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Vasiliy Titov]

[Text] Moscow December 26 TASS—Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy said his tour of Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan was a contribution towards the establishment of Russia's relations with these countries on a new basis. He said this at a news conference on Thursday [26 December] devoted to the results of his visit.

Rutskoy said his meetings and conversations with leaders of Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan had been "useful and constructive".

He said his meetings in Tehran opened good prospects for commercial and economic cooperation and development of direct economic ties.

Rutskoy believes joint projects in the Caspian area can be of special importance. He said the volume of trade with these countries can double or treble on the present level within a year. Rutskoy said there are also prospects for cooperation in the military-technological area.

Rutskoy noted Pakistan's recognition of Russia as an independent state had been announced during his stay in Pakistan. Rutskoy said progress had been made towards creating the basis for effective and mutually advantageous cooperation in the political, commercial, economic, technological and cultural areas. A draft bilateral agreement had been discussed and endorsed.

Rutskoy said much attention had been given to matters of the Afghan settlement. He said the meetings he had in Tehran, Islamabad and Kabul, as well as negotiations with leaders of the five groups of the Peshawar alliance warrant a measure of optimism and hopes for progress in a peaceful political settlement around Afghanistan.

Rutskoy said there had been an arrangement in principle about forming a multilateral commission to settle the Afghan problem. It would include all the parties to the conflict, among them the opposition and the Kabul representatives. Countries having the common border with Afghanistan—Russia, Pakistan, and Iran, as well as a number of Central Asian republics bordering on Afghanistan, would also participate. There are plans to ask the United Nations to give the commission the status of a U.N. commission.

Rutskoy also announced that there is progress towards solving the problem of Soviet prisoners-of-war detained by mujahidin. He said leaders of the Afghan opposition groups promised to honour the arrangements reached earlier in Moscow and to release a number of prisoners-of-war soon. Rutskoy specially commended the positive role played by Afghan President Najibollah. To contribute to the solution of this problem, he intends to release 100 captive mujahidin.

Commission Proposed To Settle Afghan Problem

LD2612162391 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 0930 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy's visit to countries in southwest Asia has objectively brought new elements into the process of a political settlement to the Afghan problem. Correspondent Boris Biragov reports from Kabul:

[Begin recording] [Biragov] Speaking to journalists in the Afghan capital and commenting on the results of his trip to Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, Aleksandr Rutskoy drew the attention of those present to the fact that both Tehran and Islamabad expressed a united opinion on solution of the Afghan problem: The only way is a peaceful settlement of the conflict; there is no alternative.

Moreover, the possibility of setting up a commission comprising the Republic of Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan, to embark on the implementation of a peaceful settlement of the situation in the region, is being examined. The commission would act under the aegis of the United Nations. The prerequisites for this already exist.

An example of this is the positive changes taking place in relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Afghanistan. I was able to see this for myself during my recent trip to the Afghan border province of Herat. Unlike the old days, the border crossing of Islam Kala is open to two-way traffic and is again resuming the role of a commercial gateway between Iran and Afghanistan.

The governor of Herat Province, Abdul Aziz Gorboz, told me about the changes taking place today in bilateral relations:

[Gorboz is heard briefly in Pashto, fading into Russian translation] Political, economic, and commercial relations among our countries have been noticeably increased recently, especially since the recent visit of President Najibollah to Iran. In accordance with a protocol signed earlier, in the near future we are expecting the arrival of an Iranian delegation to take part in the inauguration of a joint market on the Afghan-Iranian border. In addition, protocols have been signed and are operating on economic, scientific, and cultural cooperation. [end recording]

Supreme Soviet Ratifies Treaty on Estonia

LD2612160991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1427 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Tamara Zamyatina]

[Text] Moscow, 26 Dec (TASS)—Russia and Estonia have recognized each other as sovereign states and subjects of international law. They undertake mutual obligations on nonviolation of international legal norms. This is stipulated by the treaty on the fundamentals of interstate relations between the Russian Federation and the Estonian Republic, which was ratified by the Russian Supreme Soviet today.

The decision on ratification contains recommendations to the Russian Federation's executive bodies to proceed from the fact that "in the field of human rights, including those of national minorities, the norms of international law take priority over national legislation for all the CSCE member-states. In connection with this, the Russian Federation's executive bodies must ensure that the relevant clauses on human rights in the treaty with Estonia are fully implemented."

Further on Treaty

OW2612180791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1521 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On December 26 the Russian parliament ratified the treaty on bilateral relations between the Russian Federation and Estonia signed in Tallinn January 12, 1991

The Russian parliament has passed a resolution charging the government with immediately starting negotiations with the Estonian government to conclude bilateral agreements based on the January 12 Treaty.

The Russian Foreign Ministry was ordered to negotiate change of the border between the two states only after preliminary discussion of the issue in the Russian parliament.

"In relations with the Fstonian government the Russian executive bodies should give priority to international law in the sphere of human rights, including those of ethnic minorities, over national legislations, as all CSCE countries do," the resolution points out. In this connection, the Russian executive bodies should commit themselves to fully implementing the Russian-Estonian treaty's articles on human rights.

The Russian Federation confirms that it will protect its citizens permanently living on Estonian territory. It will also encourage Estonia's protection of its citizens permanently living on Russian territory.

During the discussion of the treaty's ratification Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev said answering questions on violation of ethnic Russians' rights in Estonia: "We will be able to put questions about violation of some of the treaty's articles to Estonia only after it comes into effect. But first it must be ratified."

Aleksandr Granberg, head of the Russian parliamentary working group on ratification of the treaties with the Baltics, noted that in case of the treaty's ratification, Russia will be able to appeal to international laws which put the treaty above national ones.

Further on Silayev's Appointment to EC

LD2412151491 Moscow TASS in English 1455 GMT 24 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow December 24 TASS—Russian President Boris Yeltsin appointed his former head of government Ivan Silayev Russian representative to the European Communities headquarters in Brussels, TASS learned today from reliable sources. Yeltsin signed the decree on December 18, they said.

Brussels will be informed on the decision in the near future, the sources said. An EC agreement is expected in 45 days.

"Ivan Stepanovich was always devoted and will always serve the interests of Russia", the sources said commenting in Silayev's reaction to the appointment.

The 61-year old new Russian ambassador to the EC was Russian prime minister from June 1990 till September 1991. Soviet president appointed him head of the Soviet Economic Management Committee after the August failed coup. On November 14 the State Council appointed Silayev as chairman of the Interstate Economic Committee—the prime minister of the economic community.

Yeltsin Invites Kohl To Pay Official Visit

LD2412171791 Berlin ADN in German 1313 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow (ADN)—Russian President Boris Yeltsin has invited Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl to pay an official visit to Russia. RIA reported on Tuesday [24 December] that Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Boris Kolokov handed the invitation to German Ambassador Dr. Klaus Blech. The agency gave no details about the date of the visit.

German President Sends Message to Yeltsin

LD2612232791 Moscow TASS in English 2253 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 27 TASS—"Germany takes note of the fact that the Russian Federation acts as the successor to the former Soviet Union. The German people welcome her as a member of the world community," points out a message from Germany's Federal President Richard von Weizsaecker to Russia's President Boris Yeltsin.

The message was today delivered to Russia's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev by German Ambassador Klaus Blech.

In the message, the Federal president assures Yeltsin that Germany will seek to develop relations existing between two countries in the spirit of friendship and cooperation.

Kozyrev expressed satisfaction with the attitude taken up by Germany and stated that a further development of friendly and goodneighbourly relations with Germany is a priority in Russia's foreign policy.

Russia's foreign minister received the German ambassador at the latter's request.

Italy Officially Recognizes Independence

LD2612101691 Moscow TASS in English 0922 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksey Golyayev]

[Text] Rome December 26 (TASS)—Italy officially recognised Russia as an independent state, Gianni de Michelis, the Italian foreign minister was quoted by Italian television as saying. Earlier according to a report of ANSA agency, the Italian Government already took the first steps in this direction.

The foreign minister's statement means Italy has recognised Russia de jure. Russia was recognised de facto which was confirmed by Giulio Andreotti, the chairman of the Italian Council of Ministers, during the Russian President Boris Yeltsin's recent visit to Italy.

PRC Delegation Visits To Discuss Relations

LD2612122891 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] A Chinese Government delegation led by Li Lanqing, PRC minister of foreign economic relations and trade, has begun its visit to Russia. In addition to Russia, the Chinese delegation will visit Belarus, the Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and some other independent states. The aim of the visit is to exchange opinions with the leaders of the former Soviet republics on the development of bilateral relations.

Supreme Soviet Official Views PRC Relations

LD2612172991 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1530 GMT 22 Dec 91

["International Panorama" program hosted by Vsevolod Ovchinnikov with Vladimir Lukin, chairman of the Committee of International Affairs of the Russian Supreme Soviet]

[Text] [Ovchinnikov] New Delhi and Beijing have taken a road that has already proved itself in relations between Beijing and Moscow. As you know, we have already fully normalized relations without waiting for the end of the painstaking work on demarcating the border. As a result, both of the two neighboring peoples feel that they have a reliable, secure rear. In China, where the Communist Party retains its leading role, it is easy to guess the attitude toward events in our country and toward the fate of the CPSU. Are we not threatened by a new rift with Beijing? I would like to put this question to Vladimir Lukin, chairman of the Committee for International Affairs of the Russian Supreme Soviet, who has just been in the PRC at the head of a parliamentary delegation.

What policy does Russia intend to pursue toward our Asian neighbor? I have heard that you conveyed to the Chinese leadership a message from President Yeltsin. Could you comment on its contents?

[Lukin] I will reply to your first question. I do not think we are threatened. I gained the impression that our relations will remain stable and constructive. I did indeed carry out a mission for the Russian president. I conveyed a message to the Chinese leadership. Such messages were conveyed previously to the leaders of other Asian neighbors who are very serious and important for us—Japan and Korea. This shows that we are starting to pay more vigorous attention to our very important Asia-Pacific neighbors.

[Ovchinnikov] We are starting to overcome Eurocentric tendencies.

[Lukin] We are starting to overcome the Eurocentrism from which we occasionally suffered. As concerns the contents of the message, it can be divided into two parts. The first is an assessment of our economic reform. The second aspect is an analysis of and proposals concerning the development of Russian-Chinese relations.

[Ovchinnikov] What should we do so that the fact that our countries are developing in different directions does not have an effect on the development of bilateral ties?

[Lukin] Different directions or different speeds—only history will provide an answer. At present it does look like different directions. We now represent not only different political systems and different tendencies, but also different, albeit neighboring, great civilizations. We have to think of the historical perspective. From the point of view of history, civilization, and geopolitics, we have an interest in friendly relations with our great Chinese neighbor. I am sure that the Chinese have an interest in the same thing. Consequently, we have common national interests which, irrespective of this or that political or ideological turn, lead us in this direction. That is why the message contains a very clear-cut proposition on deideologization of Russian-Chinese relations.

[Ovchinnikov] We hope that wisdom and far-sightedness in determining state interests will prevail over polemical impulses. Having proclaimed the deideologization of foreign policy, we will not start ideologizing it with regard to individual states.

Japanese Council of Ministers Recognizes State

LD2712042691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0320 GMT 27 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Solntsev]

[Text] Tokyo, 27 Dec (TASS)—At today's session, Japan's Cabinet of Ministers adopted a decision on the recognition of the Government of Russia as a state which is the successor of the former Soviet Union. As stated at a news conference by Koichi Kato, chief cabinet secretary, the government is studying the question of whether to recognize the 10 other republics that are members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, before the end of the year. It is expected that Japan will recognize these states on Saturday [28 December].

Touching on the question of relations with Russia, Deputy Prime Minister Michio Watanabe, Japan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, pointed out at the Cabinet session that Japan perceives the Russian Federation as a state that is the successor of the USSR. Japan is thereby proceeding from the understanding that the treaties and international obligations formerly concluded with the Soviet Union retain force in Japanese-Russian relations.

The head of the Japanese foreign political department reported that Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa has sent a message to Russian President Boris Yeltsin today. It contains congratulations on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States and expresses a striving for a settlement of the territorial problem and "a swift improvement in Japanese-Russian relations." The Japanese prime minister has also expressed the hope that Boris Yeltsin will make a visit to Japan as soon as possible.

As reported to a TASS correspondent at the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this message has been sent via the Japanese Embassy in Moscow.

According to the KYODO news agency, the Japanese Government will now approach the embassy of the former USSR in Japan as the embassy of Russia. To begin with, the agency notes, the government of Japan occupied a cautious position on the issue of the recognition of the republics of the disintegrated Soviet Union. However, after the United States, the countries of the European Community, and other states precisely defined their position, Tokyo also decided to effect recognition in the shortest possible time. Only the recognition of Georgia has been postponed for an indefinite time, which is primarily connected with the continuing fighting there.

Kozyrev, Ambassador Meet

LD2712110591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1040 GMT 27 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Ryabikin]

[Text] Moscow, 27 Dec (TASS)—Japan has announced its diplomatic recognition of Russia. At a meeting held today between Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev and Sumio Edamura, the Japanese ambassador to Moscow, the latter handed over a message from Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa to Russian President Boris Yeltsin which represents the official recognition of Russia by Japan.

The Russian minister and the ambassador of Japan also discussed prospects for relations between the two countries.

To date, about 40 states have announced the establishment of diplomatic relations with Russia.

Ministry Issues Statement on Central America

LD2512161891 Moscow TASS in English 1354 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 25 TASS—A statement by a spokesman of the Russian Foreign Ministry has been released here. It says: "The U.N. General Assembly adopted last week, without any vote, a resolution on Central America, whose co-authors included our delegation, alongside with delegations from other states. In the course of its discussion, the member-states unanimously noted the positive changes that had occurred in this part of the world due to the responsible approach of Central Americans and active contribution of non-regional states, the United Nations and the Organisation of American States. These changes lay the foundation for the final settlement of the conflict in Central America.

"The resolution expresses resolute support to the peaceful agreements, reached during the Guatemala and subsequent regional summits. It calls on Central American governments to continue their efforts to establish a durable and lasting peace. The General Assembly's expressed support to the decision of the Central American nations to declare this region a zone of peace, democracy, freedom and development which is of practical importance.

"We believe this resolution is in line with the endeavours of the international community, which have made possible positive shifts in the efforts to break the deadlock in Central America.

"The U.N. General Assembly devoted special attention during the discussion to the settlement of the Salvadorean issue, on which the fate of the peace process in the entire region now largely depends. In our opinion, the adopted resolution will exert a positive influence on the current round of talks between the Salvadorean sides, now under way in New York.

"We deem it necessary to note once again the important role, which is being played in this process by the United Nations and its secretary-general, who is discharging a mediation mission in Salvador. We hope that it will be possible to put an end shortly to the armed conflict in this Central American state."

Kozyrev Receives Cuban-American Delegation

OW2512170291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1532 GMT 25 Dec 91

[From 25 December "Diplomatic Panorama" feature—transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] One of the leaders of the anti-Castro opposition, Jorge Maz Canoza was the first to have been received by Russia's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev after the latter moved to the building in Smolensk square. The leader of the Cuban-American National Fund [Foundation] [CANF], invited to Moscow by the Support Fund for Democratic Reforms in Russia, said he would like to see such reforms take place in his own country. In turn, Kozyrev said that Russia was going to maintain a dialogue with the whole spectrum of political forces in Cuba.

DP [Diplomatic Panorama] has learned the negotiators exchanged views on the current situation in Cuba, including human rights. Cuban opposition delegates pointed to the fact that entire Soviet aid to Cuba wound up in the hands of 50 thousand career bureaucrats.

Trading and economic ties was one of the main issues discussed. People's Deputy of the Russian Federation Sergey Yushankov has told journalists that Havana had sold Russia a certain amount of sugar for 550 dollars a ton. At the same time the CANF was ready to sell Russia as much sugar in exchange for oil for 220 dollars a ton.

The point at issue is not only to diversify Russia's sources of sugar, but also to urge Castro to use world prices in trade with Russia. Yushankov believes that Russia would benefit a great deal by using competition between different producers to buy sugar from both Havana and the CANF.

About the withdrawal of the Soviet military training centre from Cuba Yushankov said that the issue proved a "whole lot more serious than it might seem first". He said the military argue that Russia has military and strategic interests in Cuba and it would be premature to withdraw from that country entirely. The military refer to a submarine base and electronic surveillance facilities accounting for a great share of intelligence concerning the United States.

People's Deputy Yushankov believes that the question must be studied by a special commission, something Cuba has already agreed to.

Regional Affairs

Yeltsin Meets With Moscow Government Leaders

LD2512225291 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2100 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Passages in quotation marks recorded]

[Text] Yeltsin had a meeting with the leadership of the Moscow Government today. A wide range of issues related to the life of this city of many millions, the functioning of the structures of power, the conditions in which the economic reforms are to be implemented, to privatization and to the problems of the delivery of food, were discussed. Our correspondent, Yevgeniy Zherebyenkov, reports:

[Zherebyenkov] Judging by the brief report that the premier of Moscow, Yuriy Luzhkov, revealed to journalists, many of the problems will be resolved in the very near future.

[Luzhkov] "In practice, all our proposals were set before Russian President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin beforehand. All these proposals have been examined thoroughly and I would like to say that all of them, without exception, were resolved in a positive way. This sets a good basis for the programs the government has begun implementing in the city, to be not only continued but that they could also have a mighty legal and economic foundation."

[Zherebyenkov] Answering the question of whether the issue of the Moscow's status was discussed at the meeting, Yuriy Luzhkov had the following to say:

[Luzhkov] "We put forward the draft of the decree to Russian President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. According to it, the corresponding operative measures, in relation to the status, are to be undertaken for the period until a full-fledged law on Moscow has been prepared."

[Zherebyenkov] It was only natural that the journalists were interested in the intended resignation of Moscow Mayor Gavriil Popov.

[Luzhkov] "Gavriil Kharitonovich's resignation application was discussed. I know that a meeting between Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin and Gavriil Kharitonovich is to take place 26 December. I think there are grounds to say that this meeting will end in Gavriil Kharitonovich reversing his decision to resign. The reason that prompted Gavriil Kharitonovich to announce his intention to resign are not of a personal nature, though it is known that he is not in the best of health. The reason is related to the fact that, objectively, conditions have developed in Moscow of late which hamper the forward movement of deep economic reforms. These reasons, at least in our meeting with Boris Nikolayevich today, have been removed. I think there are no grounds for his declining carrying out the duties of mayor."

Emergency Measures Approved

LD2612001191 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2100 GMT 25 Dec 91

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] This evening Russian President Boris Yeltsin held a meeting with the Moscow government. Certain emergency measures designed to improve the situation in the capital were approved. It was decided that in three days'

time a decree on the status of Moscow should be adopted. Tomorrow [26 December] there are to be several more decrees, under which services such as the Metro, the Moscow Power Company, the telephone network, and many others will become the property of the capital's authorities. There should be urgent food supplies. So far as the resignation of Mayor Popov is concerned: The reasons that prompted Gavriil Kharitonovich to announce his intention of resigning are associated with the fact that—quite objectively—conditions have arisen in Moscow of late which prevent progress on profound economic reform. Today—or at any rate during our meeting with Boris Nikolayevich—these reasons are being removed. I believe there are no grounds for the mayor refusing to carry out his functions.

Moscow Mayor Popov To Remain in Office

OW2612211791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2000 GMT 26 Dec 91

[From "Bulletin 4"—transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Moscow Mayor Gavriil Popov, who announced his decision to resign last week, will stay in office, reports the RSFSR president's press service. An agreement to that effect was reached in the course of President Yeltsin's talks with Mr. Popov in Moscow on Thursday [26 December].

After the two officials discussed "a variety of problems connected with the Russian capital's future," the president assured the mayor that the RSFSR government would "comprehensively assist Moscow in carrying on with its economic reforms, particularly during the transitional period."

St. Petersburg Mayor Views Creation of CIS

LD2412215191 Moscow TASS in English 1930 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] St. Petersburg December 24 TASS—The Commonwealth of Independent States is a long and roundabout way into the future, St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak said on Tuesday [24 December].

In an interview with TASS, he said the country has the same future as Europe. He welcomed the creation of the Commonwealth as a way out from the deadlock.

He warned, however, against going too far in destroying what has been created over years. He said there are certain things which should not be destroyed, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with professional diplomats.

He said Russia has always been a natural centre of the country and the restoration of its statehood is a normal process.

Liberation Group Holds St. Petersburg Rally

OW2712134591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1115 GMT 27 Dec 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Russian Liberation Movement held a rally on St. Petersburg's Palace Square on the evening of December 26.

All speakers at the rally, which was attended by 200 people, called on all Russians to form a united republic, named [word indistinct], and to protect the Russians residing in the other countries. The rally passed on appeal to heads of governments of the Commonwealth countries demanding to protect Russians.

Swedish Aid En Route for St. Petersburg

PM2712132191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Dec 91 Union Edition p 5

[Correspondent M. Zubko report: "Stockholm To Help St. Petersburg"]

[Text] Stockholm—A Boeing-737 specially chartered by the Swedish authorities will be landing at St. Petersburg Airport 24 December. It will be carrying the first consignment of food with which the Swedish Government has decided to supply the city on the Neva as part of a humanitarian aid program.

The food aid totals 15 million Swedish krona (approximately $2.5 million). The consignment is to be accompanied by Alf Svensson, a member of the Swedish Government and chairman of the Christian Democratic Party. The Swedes believe that their program will help the people of St. Petersburg get through the winter.

A number of well-known Swedish charity organizations are involved in implementing the aid program: the Erikshjalp Organization, Lakar Mission Organization, Lutherhjalp Organization, Save the Children, and others. They are not only sending food and medicines to St. Petersburg but to other cities as well: Cheboksary, in particular.

Another report has also attracted our attention: Peter Nobel, secretary general of the Swedish Red Cross, has announced that the International Red Cross has decided to coordinate humanitarian aid being sent to East European countries.

St. Petersburg Signs Agreement With Cuba

OW2512154491 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1200 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] St. Petersburg will supply Havana in 1992 with oil, oil products and timber in exchange for sugar, fruit and medicines. Its mayoralty signed an agreement on this with a Cuban governmental delegation. Settlements

for the exchanges of goods will be based on world-market prices, the press service of St. Petersburg's mayoralty told IF [INTERFAX].

Chechen Republic Promulgates New Defense Law

LD2412130791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1241 GMT 24 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Sharip Asuyev]

[Text] Groznyy, 24 Dec (TASS)—A law on the defense (protection) of the Chechen republic was promulgated here today. In accordance with it, defense forces are divided into six categories: a national guard, a borders and customs service, interior troops, special-purpose troops, a general labor service, and a reserve. All defense forces are to be subordinate to the republic's president.

Dudayev Takes Control of Law Enforcement

LD2512101791 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2100 GMT 21 Dec 91

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Dzhokhar Dudayev, the Chechen leader, has assumed general leadership of all law enforcement bodies—including the Internal Affairs Ministry, the Procuracy, the court, and the Justice Ministry—and does not intend to be idle. He was the first in the republic to fulfill his own decree: He registered his pistol with the Internal Affairs Ministry, setting an example for his fellow citizens.

Chechen Ministers Denies Guardsmen in Tbilisi

LD2512232191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2207 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Text] The evening news program contained a report that armed volunteers are arriving in Georgia from the Chechen Republic. Muvladi Udugov, minister for information and press of the Chechen Republic, phoned our editorial office and reported that the republic's government had not sent guardsmen to Tbilisi. A parliamentary group of four people and an accompanying group have flown to the capital of Georgia on a peacemaking mission. According to the latest information, communications with the plane have been lost.

Checheno-Ingushetia Abolishes Passport System

LD2512114191 Moscow TASS in English 1053 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 25 (TASS)—Residence registration and the previous passport system have been aboilished in the Chechen republic, KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA reported today. According to the newspaper, from February of 1992 citizens of the republic will be given passports certifying their Chechen citizenship and giving the right to go abroad. Soviet passports will be used in three regions of former Checheno-Ingushetia—the Nazran, Sunzhen in Malgobek regions, where the Ingush republic was proclaimed on December 14.

Tatarstan Seeks Inclusion in Commonwealth

LD2612120591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0802 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Nikolay Sorokin]

[Text] Kazan, 26 Dec (TASS)—"We are in favor of Tatarstan and other former autonomous formations that have declared sovereignty joining the Commonwealth of Independent States," Mintimer Shaymiyev, president of the Republic of Tatarstan, stated at a session of the Tatar Supreme Soviet.

In the view of the president of Tatarstan, the people are pinning their hopes for stabilization of the country and for emerging from the economic and political crisis on the Minsk and Alma-Ata accords. "Tataria is in favor of radical reforms and of the implementation of the rights of peoples to self-determination and equality," said Mintimer Shaymiyev. "We favor development of mutually beneficial relations with the Russian Federation and other members of the Commonwealth, and the resolution of all disputed issues through treaties."

The republic's head said that a process of supplementing political sovereignty in economic terms is underway. Despite the destruction of traditional supply links, the economy of Tataria is, through the efforts of its workers, heading for stabilization of production. While industrial output for eight months was 3.8- percent lower than last year, the figure to date is 1.2 percent. There is every guarantee that the recession will be halted in the coming months, the president of Tatarstan believes.

Supreme Council Votes To Join

OW2612163391 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1521 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Tatarstan's Supreme Council adopted a declaration Thursday [26 December] on Tatarstan's entrance into the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The declaration says the decision is caused by the need to pull out of the political and economic crisis following the collapse of the Soviet Union, other sovereign republics' aspiration for unification into a commonwealth of equal states and the will of Tatarstan's multinational people. The Supreme Council of Tatarstan "proclaims the republic's entrance in the Commonwealth of Independent States as a co-founder".

160 people attended the vote, 145 cast ballots. The decision was made with one vote against and 5 abstentions.

In the meantime, "Soglasiye" (Concord) deputy faction intends to demand a repeated voting on the issue. In its opinion, the decision should be taken by an overwhelming majority of deputies, i.e. by three fourth of no less than 150 votes.

Volga Germans Given Land Near Volgograd

OW2612030691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1730 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Some 300,000 sq. km [square kilometers] northwest of Volgograd (formerly occupied by Kasputin Yar rocket ground) will be given to settle the Volga Germans. Climate there is distinctly continental. Annual precipitation is 270-300 mm [millimeters]. This information was provided by Robert Petrov, chairman of the Volgograd regional council's commission on ecology and use of nature.

He also said that the area has the most infertile soil in the region. There are no farms, electricity transmission lines, transport or other communications in the area. The only open water reservoir is a salty-bitter lake.

Guslyannikov Becomes Mordovia's President

LD2712100391 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Summary] On 22 December Mordovia held repeat presidential elections. Vasiliy Guslyannikov, an electronics researcher representing the Mordovian regional organization of Democratic Russia, defeated Nikolay Biryukov, incumbent chairman of the Supreme Soviet, to become the republic's first president.

Media

Yeltsin Issues Decree Taking Over Central TV

LD2712132291 Moscow TASS in English 1251 GMT 27 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Mineyev]

[Text] Moscow December 27 TASS— Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed a decree to take over the Central State TV and Radio Company under the Russian jurisdiction and to rename it into the Russian "Ostankino" TV and Radio Company.

The decree says the new company is to broadcast news from Russia and the new Commonwealth, TASS learned on Friday [27 December]. Yegor Yakovlev, former editor-in-chief of the "MOSCOW NEWS" weekly, remains head of the company.

Deputy Minister Views Situation in Publishing

LD2712060191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 23 Dec 91

[From the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA, even with its astronomic circulation figures by international standards, will suffer losses next year to the sum of over 900 million rubles, and TRUD will suffer losses of 800 million rubles. The popular journals NOVYY MIR, OKTYABR, YUNOST, and others will be on the brink of closure.

Mikhail Poltoranin, Russian minister of press and information, told the participants of an all-Russian conference of newspaper editors this today. Is the Ministry of Communications in a position to fulfill its obligations to its subscribers? Will there be a repeat subscriptions campaign? These questions were addressed to Boris Butenko, the republic's deputy minister of communications. One may judge by the nature of the questions and replies that a serious threat hangs over glasnost and openness.

[Begin M.N. Poltoranin recording] Our task is to preserve the press. I realize that there are many newspapers and periodicals in Russia today, and not all of them will survive, because a market is a market. But, on the whole, we are committed to this cause, to maintain this standard of the fourth estate, and even to strengthen it in some areas through various state programmes. At a governmental level, there is an understanding of this matter, but there are levels of the apparatus which we have inherited, and there are influential people there who have worked for decades in this apparatus, and they have clearly set themselves the aim of doing all they can to unleash this press against the government. [end recording]

Journalists Criticize 'Inconsistent Actions'

PM2712121591 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Dec 91 First Edition p 3

[Unattributed report under "Press" rubric: "Consolidating Journalists' Power"]

[Text] The RSFSR Union of Journalists has made a statement positively supporting the Russian Government's policy of practically implementing the aims of the commonwealth of equal states. At the same time the journalists reserve the right, the statement notes, to defend their own views and criticize the government's inconsistent actions in implementing the policy of new integration.

The journalists' unions of Moscow, St. Petersburg, Bashkiria, Tataria, and other regions are calling for the amalgamation of forces and the repudiation of self-isolation and provincial aloofness. Consolidation would offer us protection from the increasingly frequent blatant flouting of the Law on the Press and from attempts by

the new administrative institutions of power at unwarranted interference in the creative activity of editorial offices and journalists' collectives. The inordinate increase from 1 January 1992 in paper costs and publication and transportation charges for the periodical press could mean ruin and bankruptcy for thousands of newspapers. The government must take urgent measures to save the press, the statement says, otherwise the RSFSR Union of Journalists will be forced to call on all journalists to take collective protest actions.

Supreme Soviet

Security, Internal Ministry Decree Opposed

LD2612201791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1924 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Galina Vinitskaya]

[Text] Moscow, 26 Dec (TASS)—The Russian Federation Supreme Soviet adopted a resolution today which suggests that the Russian president should declare invalid the section of his decree "On the Formation of the RSFSR Ministry of Security and Internal Affairs," concerning the merger of the RSFSR Ministry of Internal Affairs and the RSFSR Federal Security Agency. The resolution points out that, for the interaction of the bodies of legislative and executive power on the issues of ensuring security in the Russian Federation, the creation of the Russian Security Council should be speeded up, for which purpose the discussion of the draft law "On the Russian Federation Security Council" in the first reading, should be included in the agenda of the current session. The Supreme Soviet committees must begin work on the juridical basis which would regulate the organization and order of control of the activities of special services by the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet.

Russian Supreme Soviet Session 26 Dec

LD2612222191

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 1924 GMT on 26 December broadcasts a recording of the day's proceedings at the Russian Supreme Soviet session in Moscow which was chaired by Ruslan Imranovich Khasbulatov.

The recording begins with Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev speaking. He says that the decision on the name of Russia and the Russian Federation makes recognition by the outside world easier. A new task is settlement of relations with near neighbours. Kozyrev calls the Russian treaty with Estonia an "act of political courage". No agreements can be made to fill the treaty with specific content before the treaty is ratified. Following ratification there will be interstate negotiations between Russia and Estonia, he says. If the treaty had been ratified earlier, the citizenship issue in Estonia would have been discussed in a different way. Further delay will cause loss to Russians in Estonia, he says.

At 1932 GMT Aleksandr Granberg, chairman of the Interrepublican Relations Committee and head of the working group on negotiations with Estonia speaks. He also regrets the delay in ratifying the treaty. The Russian-speaking groups in Estonia are asking for this ratification to take place immediately, he says, adding that Narva and other soviets have also asked for agreements to be signed. An agreement for 1992 on trade and economic relations envisages U.S. dollar prices and clearing agreements. Thus, he continues, the economic part of the treaty is already operating. Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin met Ruutel twice, in November and December of this year, he notes adding that they said the treaty would be ratified soon by the Russian parliament.

At 1940 GMT Deputy (Maloslov) argues for help to Estonia in its search for democracy, by skillful diplomatic steps.

At 1942 GMT Lukin, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Policy Affairs, says that the question of ratification has been discussed in his committee and that it was decided that the treaty should be ratified. He agrees with previous speakers that nonratification will give free play to nationalists in Estonia, who will adopt treaties against Russians in Estonia. His committee also recommends that any negotiations on territorial issues must be approved by the Russian parliament first.

At 1947 GMT a deputy proposes delaying ratification for a month to give the working group time to prepare proposals.

At 1948 GMT the presenter says that ratification was adopted.

At 1949 GMT Valeriy Dmitriyevich (Zorkin), chairman of the Constitutional Court, reads a draft decision by the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation on the situation with regard to lawfulness, expressing concern at a number of articles curbing the freedom of the press. Privatization is taking place in contradiction to constitutional principles. The adoption of a new constitution should take place as soon as possible.

At 1951 GMT the draft decision is adopted.

At 1952 GMT a draft on measures to protect vulnerable groups of the population during the deregulation of prices is read. A decision on the draft is postponed until the next sitting, and the organization of a Russian Academy of Sciences was discussed, the presenter says.

The recording ends at 1954 GMT.

Belarus

Romania Officially Recognizes Republic

LD2612221491 Moscow TASS in English 1807 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By BELTA-TASS correspondent Tatyana Khryapina]

[Text] Minsk December 26 TASS—Romania has recognised the Republic of Belarus as a sovereign state. This is officially announced in a personal message from Romanian Foreign Minister Adrian Nastase to his Belarussian counterpart Petr Kravchenko.

The message was delivered today by Vasile Sandru, the Romanian ambassador in Moscow, who paid a working visit to Minsk.

The sovereignty of the Republic of Belarus had been officially recognised by Sweden, Hungary, Mongolia, Bulgaria, and Lithuania, a spokesman at the republican Foreign Ministry's Information Department told BELTA.

Minsk, Berlin To Open Consular Offices

LD1812195191 Moscow TASS in English 0626 GMT 18 Dec 91

[By correspondent Tatyana Khryapina]

[Text] Minsk December 17 [date as received] TASS—German and Belarus general consular offices will be opened in Minsk and Berlin, Belarus Foreign Minister Petr Kravchenko told reporters at a news conference on the results of the German special envoy Wilhelm Heink's visit to Minsk.

The decision, however, does not mean a judicial recognition of Belarus, as Germany is bound by the European Community rulings.

Heink met with Belarus parliament Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich to discuss problems, pertaining to Belarus's integration into the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the conference on disarmament, and the Helsinki process. This question will be discussed in Prague on January 30.

Much attention was paid to turning Belarus into a nuclear-free zone, into a neutral state. Belarus's role in the new Commonwealth was also discussed.

Heink's reaction to the new Commonwealth was "positive and well-balanced", according to Kravchenko.

Government Deputies Oppose Reform, Reelection

PM2012100191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 19 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Nikolay Matukovskiy report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "There Is No Quorum and There Will Not Be Any?"]

[Text] Minsk—The eighth extraordinary session of the Republic of Belarus Supreme Soviet has started in a crisis atmosphere, which had been building up for a long time.

Ninety deputies did not come to the session—one-fourth of all the people's representatives. This has become a usual phenomenon. Such "disobedience" by the people's representatives is creating many complexities when an important decision needs to be made.

In order to somehow improve parliament's work, Supreme Soviet Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich put to the vote the question of its reform and the issue of whether it should be made less unwieldy and more flexible and efficient. This question was put to the vote three times. Three times it was rejected by the majority of parliamentarians.

Parliamentary opposition leader Z. Poznyak then made a proposal: To set a date for the elections of a new Supreme Soviet. Even more deputies expressed their opposition to this in a secret ballot.

In other words, the deputies do not want to either reform or be reelected. But they do not want to work either. But the session has to resolve several very important questions, including the adoption of laws on the budget for 1992, on taxes, and so on. How is this to be done....?

Referendum on Parliament, Government Urged

OW2512220391 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1513 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] Belarus's Popular Front intends to launch a campaign for conducting a referendum on confidence in Belarus's parliament and government. Its spokeswoman, MP [member of parliament] Galina Semdyanova, told IF [INTERFAX] that Belarus's Popular Front stands for dissolving the parliament and dismissing the government. According to her, the parliament 80 percent of whose members are former Communist Party functionaries is ineffective.

Moldova

President Calls Gorbachev 'Great Reformer'

LD2612183291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1555 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By correspondent Valeriy Demidetskiy]

[Text] Kishinev, 26 Dec (TASS)—Mikhail Gorbachev will "go down in history as a great reformer in spite of his mistakes and inconsistency," said Moldovan President Mircea Snegur in an interview given to a TASS correspondent today.

He underscored that Gorbachev is "one of the most contradictory political figures of the 20th century. The

reforms that he started in 1985 objectively and inevitably were to lead to what has already happened—the disappearance of the CPSU and the USSR as a unitarian and ideological empire."

"Even if Gorbachev has not admitted this to himself in the depth of his soul, undoubtedly his contribution lies in the fact that he restrained himself from the temptation of opposing these processes by using force," Mircea Snegur said. "It seems to me that it was impossible to demand that he dismantle totalitarianism, build law-governed and democratic states on the foundations of the former Union republics, and carry out the transition to a market economy. After all, it should be recognized that, until very recently, society was not ready to accept the ideas that today are laid down as the foundation of practical activities of politicians in states which have become part of the Commonwealth of Independent States."

Government To Free Prices on 2 Jan

OW2612211291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2000 GMT 26 Dec 91

["Bulletin 4" feature—transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Moldovan Prime Minister Valeriu Muravski has unequivocally supported the plan to free prices in Moldova, just as in Russia, as of January 2. Speaking in parliament in Kishinev Thursday [26 December], Mr. Muravski explained it by the need to curb the economic decline and take effective steps to improve the republic's economic position.

Despite the inevitable price hikes, he said, the Moldovan government would keep the prices of certain socially significant goods and services under control. He warned that the most serious problem stemming from the liberalization of prices would be cash shortages, since the 600 million rubles at the Moldovan bank's disposal would be out in 45-60 days, considering the expected wage growth by 300 to 400 percent.

Parliament Legalizes Private Land Ownership

LD2612162191 Moscow TASS in English 1232 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By MOLDOVA-PRESS correspondent Yelena Tsorina]

[Text] Kishinev December 26 TASS—Private ownership of land was legalised in Moldavia. It is one of the fundamental provisions of the republic's land code adopted by the Moldavian parliament.

Collective farms will retain the status of farms with the collective form of economic management. Members of collective and state farms and other agricultural enterprises, willing to quit them and become private farmers, can now do it. On the basis of their application, local governing bodies allot a land plot for them and hand over part of the cost of the enterprise's property. Private farmers may eventually merge, retaining for themselves the right to land ownership. Agricultural enterprises are extended the right to be converted into share companies or aquire other organisational forms.

The law is enacted on January 1, 1992.

Dnestr Vice President Favors United Republic

LD2212112191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 20 Dec 91

[From the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] Since the tragic events of a week ago on the banks of the Dnestr when seven people died, paths to accord and peace are continuing to be sought in Moldova and in the Dnestr region. Armed posts on the borders of the two republics have been removed, townspeople's faces have again become calmer, and the government of the Dnestr Republic is deciding how to unravel the tangle of extremely acute economic problems.

Legislators of Belarus and the Ukraine have been helping in the restoration of good relations between Kishinev and Tiraspol over the past few days. A group of people's deputies from St. Petersburg will begin work here today. The arrival of a large group of representatives of the Russian parliament is expected tomorrow or the day after. The first stage of the work of the conciliation commission of members of the leadership of the Dnestr region and of Moldova has ended with some success as well.

[A.A. Karaman, vice president of the Dnestr Republic] We have done the main thing. We have withdrawn the armed formations located in Dubossary, as there could have been a misfortune on an even greater scale than the one that occurred. It is most probable that Moldova will join the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]. This can be sensed, generally, from all of the prerequisites and from the visit by President Snegur. We would also like to be part of this CIS. We would like Moldova to be united and indivisible.

Yedinstvo Revises Aims Toward Commonwealth

LD2712100991 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0700 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Participants in the second congress of the Yedinstvo [Unity] Inter-Movement of Moldova have revised the movement's program documents and have excluded the points from them on adherence to the socialist choice and the preservation of the Union. The creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Moldova's participation in it is supported, to the extent that it is directed toward the creation of a common economic, political, and military zone, as well as toward ensuring human rights.

The Inter-Movement supports the slogan of Moldovan independence, considering it an alternative to joining

Romania, which the participants in the congress categorically reject. At the same time, the Inter-Movement considers that Moldova is not viable as an independent and autonomous state, and therefore is in favor of the creation of a federation of Bessarabian oblasts, including the right bank and the Izmail part of Odessa Oblast. According to delegates to the congress, a federation of Bessarabian oblasts could be under the joint control of Moldova, the Ukraine, Russia, Romania, and Turkey. The Inter-Movement is for the federalization of Moldova as a minimum, on the basis of three republics: the Dnestr Republic, the Gagauz Republic, and Moldova proper.

Ukraine

Economic 'Friction' With Russia Over Prices

PM2612205291 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Correspondent S. Tsikora report: "First Disagreement in the CIS: Financial and Economic Friction Between the Ukraine and Russia"]

[Text] At a session of the government delegations of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Moscow, friction increased over financial and economic issues between the Ukraine and Russia.

On his return to Kiev from the session, Ukrainian First Deputy Prime Minister K. Masik urgently convened a crisis committee. Ukrainian television transmitted an interview with its members.

They said that the reason for the financial and economic friction between Ukraine and Russia was the republics' different starting conditions on the eve of price liberalization. Russia already has increased wages on its territory, while the Ukraine cannot do this because it does not have the necessary supplies of cash. When prices are "released," the Ukraine is threatened with a mass decline in the living standard of its population and a total emptying of store counters.

Russia categorically rejected the Ukraine's proposal to make the Goznak [State Bank Notes Administration] factory and the Mint joint enterprises serving the CIS's ruble zone. A proposal was propsed then once again to postpone the date of the release of prices so that by the day of price liberalization all the republics would have the necessary money supply. Russia's representatives stated that the day has been named, and they will not accept a further postponement.

It is clear from the remarks of the members of the crisis committee that they are drawing up for the president of the republic several different economic initiatives for the conference of heads of the republics in Minsk. It is proposed to blockade the Ukraine's territory against an influx of devalued rubles and the export of goods from the Ukraine, first and foremost food. Among the proposals are an immediate increase in wages, bringing them in line with the level of earnings in Russia. If the republic finds itself without the necessary quantities of cash to do this, the additional sums required will be credited to savings accounts for workers, employees, and the military, so that everyone will be able to receive what he is owed later.

But the republic's main defensive shield should now be reusable coupons. According to the members of the crisis committee, they could be introduced immediately by the republic to act as money for the transitional period. Given that in the initial period they would be used exclusively to pay for food products, their introduction into circulation could instantaneously change both the economic and the political situation. According to V. Pilipchuk, chairman of a standing commission of the republic Supreme Soviet, the Ukrainian coupons could "attract" even the meager reserves of goods from neighboring republics, so that these neighbors, having received coupons in exchange, would then be able to acquire food at the markets.

Other possible means of protecting the Ukraine's economic interests also were mentioned, including the temporary introduction of rationing for essential food products, the tightening of customs regulations, and the introduction of high tariffs for the export of food and goods from the Ukraine. But particularly surprising was the appeal of one member of the crisis committee to kolkhoz chairmen and private owners of hogs and steers to refrain from selling meat at the cities' markets for the time being. Rubles have been devalued completely, he stated. He added: Wait till the Ukrainian coupons and gryvnas [currency units] are introduced, for otherwise you will be making a mistake.

People in Kiev already have started talking about the possible convocation of an extraordinary session of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet.

Reaction to Price Reform

OW2612212791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2000 GMT 26 Dec 91

["Bulletin 4" feature—transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Over the past two days the Ukrainian Council of Ministers has been discussing results of the meeting between representatives of the Commonwealth countries and position of the Russian Federation insisting on preliminary date for liberalization of price set for January 2.

So far, Ukraine has outlined two measures in response to liberalization of prices in Russia: introduction of multiple coupons January 2 and rationing of consumption. In fact, coupons will not be an addition to money, but will virtually replace them.

As Aleksandr Yemelyanov, spokesman for the Ukrainian government, told local radio, it was planned to

introduce coupons later; however, in the present situation, this process will have to be accelerated. Yemelyanov said coupons will be used in state shops, while markets, services and state-owned public catering facilities will continue to receive rubles. Gradually, rubles will go out of circulation in theses sectors too.

Yemelyanov said the construction of a money-printing plant had already begun. In his opinion, that does not rule out the possibility of printing part of the national currency abroad, most likely in Canada. He said by the end of next year the required amount of national currency will be printed.

The Council of Ministers will submit its proposals to Ukraine's President Leonid Kravchuk. An official statement on measures to be taken by Kiev is expected on Friday [27 December]. IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent says Ukraine will possibly offer the Commonwealth of Independent States to postpone liberalization of prices for several months.

Leaders Speak Out on Economic Problems

LD2612211191 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1813 GMT 26 Dec 91

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] Some leaders of the Ukraine say problems may arise in the nearest future in connection with the republic's participation in the Commonwealth of Independent States. The participants of the Crisis Headquarters, as the First Vice-Premier of the Ukraine Konstantin Masik called it, which began its work on December 25, hold the following view on the issue:

Konstantin Masik: The euphoria caused by the signing of the agreements in Minsk and Alma-Ata is fading. Liberalization is forced upon us in the varying conditions that exist in Russia and the other republics. Rates of inflation differ; moreover, the salaries are different, with Russia heading the list. And this is only natural since the money printing machine is in Russia. This forced us to appeal to all the delegations to support the proposal made by the Ukraine to postpone the liberalization of prices by at least 2 weeks so we can prepare. Our view was not taken into account even though a majority of republics supported us. Representatives of Russia were firm in their decision to introduce free prices as of January 2, giving us no time to resolve the numerous problems. That is why we formed the so-called Crisis Headquarters involving members of the Ukranian Supreme Soviet Presidium and heads of the chief ministries of the Ukraine. In 24 hours we have to work out for the president, the Supreme Soviet and the Government of the Ukraine methods to protect the population.

Vladimir Pilipchuk, chairman of the Supreme Soviet Commission on the Economic Reform and Economic Management: We have not received guarantees from Russia that we'll get the necessary number of banknotes. We could protect our market with the help of coupons, but we don't have enough of them at present to introduce instead of money. We need some 80 banknotes per person, not to mention their nominal value, while we now have only 20. The other way is to raise wages and salaries transferring the amount not covered by cash to special bank accounts so that people can use checks, paying in cash only for minor purchases. Speaking of the Minsk accords and the agreement on economic cooperation, they presuppose a coordinated price policy. When we asked our colleagues from Russia how they understood this agreement they said they were going to liberalize the prices, and if we do not agree they will do it without us.

Anatoly Pecherov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet Commission on Planning, the Budget, Finances and Prices: If Russia does not change its stand after the summit in Minsk on December 30, we'll have to call a Supreme Soviet session in early January and get its approval on the change of prices on certain essential foods set in our law on prices.

Vladimir Lanovoy, Ukranian Government minister of property and business: We intend to introduce a system of economic security of the Ukraine, of macro-economic stabilization in various fields: prices, the budget, credits, social security. The Ukraine's potential partners abroad are getting the impression we have no priorities. If we don't speed up this work, we will have no goods, no currency, while our facilities are owned by people from Russia and other republics rather than our citizens, with the former buying up our facilities through dummies since they'll have large sums in both hard currency and roubles.

Aleksandr Emelyanov, first deputy chairman of the Government Economic Council of the Ukraine: Welcoming the Minsk accords we thought we did away with dictate of the center. We did do away with administrative dictate, but the economic one remained. It is in the hands of those who own the money-printing machine.

Vladimir Lanovoy: In Minsk the states agreed on common actions, but Russia's Vice-Premier Gaydar says he has his own understanding of common actions: We meet, reach some agreement and then all act in their own way. The Ukraine has its own way and possibilities, but we haven't enough time and we are now in a double blockade: On the one hand we have no cash, on the other—the starting conditions are different. Russia has already carried out a pay raise. We suggested reaching similar levels everywhere and then introducing a market economy where the prices will level out all the differences. Russia said: Go ahead. We said we have no cash. They said it was our problem. Lanovoy continued: We were told we would be given cash only to pay out the debts in wages and salaries and only in such hot-spots as Donbass.

Aleksandr Emelyanov: We said we'll be forced to introduce stricter customs regulations if Russia introduces free prices as of January 2.

Vladimir Getman, board chairman of the Ukraine Agroprombank: I support the proposal to ration food temporarily to protect the population. It is impossible to create a currency market on the basis of a devastated market of produce.

Nikolay Kaskevitch, Ukranian labor minister: I warn the citizens of the Ukraine against buying up devalued money they are bringing in from the Russian Federation and advise them not to take meat out of the Ukraine to Russia.

Kravchuk Issues Decree Against Speculation

LD2712115991 Kiev Radio Kiev Network in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk has issued a decree on provisional urgent measures to reinforce the fight against speculation and illegal trade activity. In order to provide the population with basic goods and services at guaranteed prices, the president has decreed for the period until 1 December 1992:

To preserve price regulation by the state; to prohibit legal persons and citizens from selling such goods and services at prices higher than those fixed by the state; the Cabinet of Ministers of the Ukraine is to compile before 1 January a list of goods on which state price regulations and sales procedure are to be preserved; the State Customs Committee of the the Ukraine and the Interior Ministry are to exercise permanent control over the procedure for exporting consumer goods from the Ukraine, including food and industrial and technical products, and will prosecute offenders.

In accordance with the Ukraine's law on the militia, the Ukraine's internal affairs bodies and the State Customs Committee are to cooperate closely to protect the consumer market directly at customs posts; goods confiscated from offenders will be used first to satisfy the needs of invalids, families with many children, orphans, and other poor strata of the population. The local soviets of people's deputies are to use 30 percent of the funds received from the sale of property confiscated from speculators and other offenders and from fines in order to reward employees who fight these kinds of offense.

The full text of the decree is published in the press.

Chairman Plyushch Comments on Economic Reforms

LD2212073191 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1712 GMT 21 Dec 91

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] Chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet: There is growing support for economic reforms among the parliamentarians, although they still fail to perceive the word ownership. Ivan Plyushch, chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, speaking on December 20 to a press conference devoted to the results of the fourth session of the Ukrainian legislature, said that the parliament had discussed 272 issues, adopted 112 resolutions, 37 laws, 50 draft laws had been approved in their first reading. According to Plyushch, a radical economic reform has not yet started in the republic; therefore, there are no grounds to expect any changes in the economy. It remains in a critical state and no political rallies or debates may affect it. Ivan Plyushch is convinced that ownership forms are to be changed.

Asked whether the current Ukrainian Government is capable to implement radical economic reforms, Ivan Plyushch noted that there had practically been no government in the Ukraine prior to December 1, as the Cabinet of Ministers had not been able to pursue independent financial and credit policies. Therefore, Plyushch believes, it is now necessary to grant a credit of confidence to Vitold Fokin's government.

Donbass Miners Demand Payment, Better Benefits

LD2612164891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1320 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondents A. Gordeyev and V. Yurkevich]

[Text] Donetsk, 26 Dec (TASS)—Donbass miners have warned the Ukrainian leadership about a dangerously explosive situation that may lead to unpredictable consequences. A telegram sent to the president and the republic's government says that the situation is getting out of control. The payment of wages is being delayed. Benefits for years of service and payment for holidays are not corresponding with actual cost of living and living standards. Miners are demanding an urgent solution to these issues. All points of their demands will remain in force until there is full stability in prices and living standards. In the event of a refusal, they warn, all responsibility for the unpredictable consequences will lie with the leadership of the Ukraine and the president. The telegram was signed by leaders of miners' independent trade unions in Donetsk, Makeyevka, Krasnoarmeysk, and a number of miners' centers here, along with members of the Workers' (Strike) Committee of the town of Donetsk.

Supreme Soviet 'Provisos' to Minsk Agreement

PM2012124791 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

["Expert Opinion" by Viktoriya Vinogradova: "Different Edition of Agreement on Commonwealth of Independent States Appears"]

[Text] The fact that the Ukraine ratified the Minsk agreement without discussion by a qualified majority of 288 deputies was reported by all the papers simultaneously. But no one, apart from IZVESTIYA, drew attention to the fact that the agreement it ratified was not the one that was concluded in the Belovezhskaya Forest, so the event was not commented on.

IZVESTIYA confined itself to recording the ratification of the Agreement with 12 (!) substantial provisos, incidentally mistaking them for amendments, and also cited the actual content of the provisos.

But the provisos relating to the Minsk agreement, which were adopted at the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, change the content of the actual treaty in some very important areas. Since there is no room in a newspaper to discuss all 12 provisos, we will dwell on just some of them.

For instance, in Article 5 of the Minsk agreement, the sides "guarantee open borders, free movement of citizens, and transfer of information within the Commonwealth."

The Kiev "edition" is more specific: The sides "guarantee open borders providing their citizens with unimpeded contacts...."

What this innovation means is that while in the first version "open borders" does not prevent a Russian coming to Kiev from obtaining the right to housing or work, the second version could block that opportunity.

Article 7, which envisages that the sides will regard the coordination of foreign policy activity "through the common institutions of the Commonwealth" as their joint activity, has also been significantly altered.

Kiev has decided that "consultations" will suffice for this sphere of relations, which is by no means the same thing, of course.

Nor can one overlook the fundamental change in the content of the article on armed forces. In Minsk the three sides reached agreement on the fundamental question of preserving and maintaining the single strategic military space under a single command, thus generating the hope of unified armed forces for the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States], whereas in Kiev one side, relaxing back home once again, added to Article 6: "The Commonwealth states will reform the groupings of the former USSR's Armed Forces on their territory, creating their own armed forces on the basis of them, and they will cooperate in safeguarding international peace and security."

That is, if we translate this "edition" from legal language, we read: Instead of a single army there will be ethnic formations, which may not even have a single command.

Now for the actual procedure for the adoption of provisos, which for treaties with a limited number of participants, in accordance with the Vienna convention on international treaties, must involve the adoption of the provisos by all the participants—which is basically equivalent to a proposal to resume talks or make amendments to the agreed text. If one assumes that this accord was reached in inevitable haste by unprecedented means—telephone conversations between Kravchuk and Yeltsin and Shushkevich—then the question is: Which edition of the agreement will have force?

Postscript

An explanation has been received from official circles, according to which the provisos (alias the amendments adopted by the Ukrainian parliament) are recommendatory. But Ukrainian President Kravchuk has already been appointed commander in chief of the Ukrainian army, set up on the basis of the relevant military districts and the Black Sea Fleet. This raises the question of a single strategic space, a single army, and the recommendatory nature of the provisos.

Then there is the question of keeping the ruble as the common monetary unit and introducing ethnic currencies on the basis of special agreements and coordination of economic activity. On the day when Boris Yeltsin addressed the Russian parliament and announced what the three republics wanted regarding the ruble, the Ukrainian parliament decided that it would have "second money"—reusable coupons, a large consignment of which has already been delivered to Kiev from France—no later than next January. Kiev experts believe that this measure is necessary before they have their own money to protect the Ukrainian market from the billions of rubles of monopoly money that are being printed at the factories of our Main Administration for the Production of State Bills, Coins, and Orders....

Crimean Groups To Seek Independence Referendum

OW2612193991 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1521 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] In Simferopol the Crimean Republican Movement and the "Popular Opposition" bloc activists have started to collect signatures in support of emergency referendum on Crimea's separation from Ukraine.

A public group preparing the action has offered to include in the voting slips the question: "Are you in favor of proclaiming Crimea an independent republic as part of the union of sovereign states?"

Soldiers Take New Allegiance Pledge

LD2312234391 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1906 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] On December 22, two military detachments located in Kiev and Ivano-Frankovsk were the first in republic to pledge allegiance to the independent Ukraine and Ukrainian people.

In Kiev the oath of allegiance was given by young soldiers belonging to a regiment of internal troops. It is intended that on January 1 these servicemen will become part of the newly established National Guard of Ukraine: being an independent state, the Ukraine will start financing it from 1992.

In Ivano-Frankovsk the ceremony of taking the oath of allegiance by a military detachment headed by Lt.

Colonel Bogdan Shkrabik was participated by parents of the young soldiers and representative of the city authorities. Priests sanctified a blue-yellow flag hoisted in the military settlement to the tune of the new Ukrainian anthem.

The oath of allegiance endorsed by the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet says: I am commencing the military service and ceremonially pledge to the Ukrainian people to be always true and devoted to the Ukrainian people, conscientiously and honestly to follow the military duty, commanders' orders, to observe unwaveringly the Constitution and laws of the Ukraine, and to preserve military and trade secrets.

I pledge to defend the Ukrainian state and stand staunchly on guard of her freedom and independence.

I pledge to never betray the people of the Ukraine.

A ceremony of giving the military oath of allegiance to the Ukraine will also be held next Sunday [29 December] in other military detachments of the new National Guard of Ukraine.

The wording of the oath was printed in a print shop and the commanders of the guard sent the text to detachments.

Armenia

Republic Said To Drop NKAO Unification Demand

LD2612195491 Berlin ADN in German 1842 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Excerpt] Moscow (ADN)—Armenia evidently intends to give up its demand for unification with the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh [NKAO]. According to NEGA [NEZAVISSIMAYA GAZETA NEWS AGENCY] in Yerevan, Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan claimed that the inhabitants of the autonomous region would agree to the sort of status granted to the autonomous regions in the Russian Federation. Ter-Petrosyan said that this status must be set out in the Alma-Ata agreement on the founding of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The president did not say whether Armenia would make ratification of the agreement signed in the Kazakh capital dependent on this issue. [passage omitted]

Supreme Soviet Appeals to Commonwealth on NKAO

LD2612220391 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2100 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Because of the worsening situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and the continuous shelling of Armenian villages, the Armenian Supreme Soviet adopted an appeal to the parliaments and heads of state of the Commonwealth that states that the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh is explosive. After the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, subunits of the Army and the Internal Troops of the former Soviet Union are being withdrawn from the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, and the military formations stationed on the territory of Azerbaijan are being concentrated around Nagorno-Karabakh. Stepanakert, the republic's capital, as well as border villages, are being continually shelled. The Armenian Supreme Soviet believes that actions by Azerbaijan leadership are contradictory to the Alma-Ata declaration.

President on National Guard, Army Formation

LD2612231791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2224 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By correspondent Tigran Liloyan]

[Text] Yerevan, 27 Dec (TASS)—"The Armenian authorities are seeking to set up their own army, but, assessing the real situation soberly, they intend to be content for now with the formation of a national guard." Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan stated this on 26 December at a meeting with the command personnel of the staff and units of the 7th Guards Army stationed on the republic's territory. The president advocated a settlement of the presence of the joint armed forces of the Commonwealth on the territory of the sovereign states and of their status with the help of special agreements.

The meeting was held at the soldiers' initiative. The discussion dealt with the fate of the Armed Forces of the former Union and with military reform, which the leaders of the Commonwealth member states will concentrate on in a few days' time in Minsk.

Leader Notes 'Positive' Commonwealth Process

NC2512170491 Yerevan ARMENPRES International Service in Armenian 1215 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Statement issued by the press center of the Armenian Supreme Soviet on the Supreme Soviet session in Yerevan on 23 December]

[Text] Deputies Paruyr Ayrikyan, Arshak Sadoyan, Garnik Isagulyan, Ashot Bleyan, Vardan Zurnachyan, and Ovannes Igityan took part in the exchange of views on the candidates nominated for chairman of the Supreme Soviet.

At the deputies' suggestion, Ruben Torosyan and Mels Saakyan were nominated for the post of chairman of the Supreme Soviet Standing Commission on Economic Independence and Economic Development. After the nominees replied to the deputies' questions, the chairman proposed to extend the session but did not receive enough votes. Therefore, secret voting for chairman of the Supreme Soviet was postponed until the next day.

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan spoke at the evening session.

Referring to the content of the documents signed in Alma-Ata, he assessed as positive the process started at the 26 August session of the USSR Supreme Soviet and at the 6 September USSR Congress of People's Deputies.

He noted that while remaining true to their political platform, the Armenian authorities participated in the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Alma-Ata, which in effect brought the process of Armenia's independence to its logical conclusion.

He then stressed that before ratifying the signed documents at the Supreme Soviet, it is necessary to seriously examine and prepare the objections and reservations to be annexed to them. Ter-Petrosyan underlined that there probably are a great number of unresolved issues which would be subject to serious examination in the future.

The president then responded to the deputies' questions.

President Appoints 7th Army Representatives

NC2112122891 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1950 GMT 19 Dec 91

["The Armenian president's decree appointing plenipotentiary representatives of Armenian executive power to the command office of 7th Army units and formations stationed on republic territory"]

[Text] Aiming to monitor material and technical supply to 7th Army units and formations stationed on Armenian territory, to guarantee servicemen's social protection and organized conscription, and to prevent possible encroachment and other undesirable incidents against them, I hereby decide:

To appoint plenipotentiary representatives of Armenian executive power to the command office of 7th Army units and formations stationed on Armenian territory.

The plenipotentiary representatives' appointment should be agreed between the Armenian Defense Ministry and the 7th Army's command office.

The Ministry should consult the command office and within one week submit an active draft to be confirmed by the president on the plenipotentiary representatives' status attached to the command office of the army units and formations.

[Signed] Levon Ter-Petrosyan, Armenian President

[Dated] 19 December 1991, Yerevan

Leader Issues Return Deadline for Deserters

NC2112130691 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1950 GMT 19 Dec 91

["The Armenian president's decree on future military service by servicemen who deserted their army units or place of service"]

[Text] Intending to safeguard Armenian security and consolidate law and order, I hereby decide that all Army servicemen who are Armenian citizens and who deserted their army units or places of service should present themselves to the relevant rayon, city, and city-rayon military commissariat by 29 December for roll call and to continue their military service on Armenian territory.

Those who do so by the deadline will be absolved of blame.

Those who fail to show will be punished according to Armenian law.

The Defense Ministry, Interior Ministry, and State Directorate for National Security are responsible for implementing the decree.

[Signed] Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan

[Dated] 19 December 1991, Yerevan

Economic Agreement Signed With Kazakhstan

NC2512161491 Yerevan Radio Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1930 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] The leaders of the 11 former Soviet republics signed an agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States in Alma-Ata on 21 December.

An extensive report published in HAYASTANI HANRAPETUTYUN paper says the Alma-Ata meeting was significant for Armenia for yet another important reason. Armenian Vice President and Prime Minister Gagik Arutyunyan and Kazakhtan Prime Minister Tereshchenko signed a bilateral trade and economic cooperation agreement for 1992.

Opened Gas Pipeline Delivers 'Small Amounts'

OW2412022291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2046 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Armenian Vice-President and Premier Gagik Arutyunyan has confirmed reports on the opening of a gas pipeline delivering gas to Armenia through Azerbaijani territory. The pipeline was cut off by Azerbaijani authorities in early November.

Speaking in parliament Monday [23 December], Mr. Arutyunyan said that for the present gas is being delivered in small amounts.

According to the Azerbaijani President's press service, Azerbaijan is now facing fuel and gas shortages. Gas has not been delivered in planned amounts from Russia to Azerbaijan for already two weeks and its supplies from Armenia have stopped altogether. Less gas is being received from Iran. The press service has information that in the near future Russia will cut gas supplies to Armenia and Azerbaijan following a decline in its extraction.

IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent in Yerevan says the only pipeline providing Armenia with gas (about 2 million cubic meters a day) is the one going through Georgian territory. However, Armenia needs at least ten times more than that.

Mr. Arutyunyan said a group of Armenian specialists had left for Turkmenistan to hold talks on gas supplies from that republic.

Azerbaijan

NKAO Troop Withdrawal 'Well Organized'

PM2712114191 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 27 Dec 91 p 1

[A. Khokhlov report under general headline "Internal Troops Have Left Karabakh: Last Soldier Left Nagorno-Karabakh by End of Yesterday Afternoon"]

[Text] As Colonel General V. Savvin, commander of Internal Troops, told KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA, units and subunits under his command are continuing embarkation at Gyandzha military airfield. Troops from Nizhniy Novgorod have already left the Transcaucasus and have been airlifted by military transport to their permanent location. Units from the "Don" division are waiting to fly out; Rostov Airport is not receiving planes

because of bad weather. Subunits of the 81st operational regiment, which is leaving with its weapons, are being embarked. Agreement has been reached with the Armenian side on the return of those weapons.

The withdrawal of the troops from Stepanakert, Martuni, and Mardakert was well organized and went according to schedule. The troop commanders took prompt measures to prevent confrontations during the march. There were no attacks on the troop convoy. Firing was heard in Stepanakert, but the military believe that it was not connected with the withdrawal of the Internal Troops units.

President Discusses Alma-Ata Summit, Accord

NC2612112191 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1800 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] President Mutalibov on 20 December received a group of the people's representatives. In opening the meeting, Mutalibov congratulated the people on behalf of the Azerbaijan Republic's Supreme Soviet. He mentioned that Egypt has recognized the Azerbaijan Republic.

Mutalibov gave a detailed report on his visit to Alma-Ata and on the document signed there. He asserted that not participating in the Commonwealth of Independent States would have been wrong. Significant work was carried out to have the document signed after the Alma-Ata summit safeguard and maintain the sovereign rights of Azerbaijan as an independent country. (?Reference) was made to our principled stand on the republic's territorial integrity, security, and economic (?viability). Regarding the [word indistinct] of the Armed Forces, the presidents of Azerbaijan and the Ukraine held differing views.

President Mutalibov said that the official documents signed in Alma-Ata will be debated and ratified by the republic's parliament. He noted, however, that the parliament may change the document's provisions. Mutalibov also discussed in length matters related to the measures taken to remove the economic crisis, normalize the situation in the mountainous region in Nagorno-Karabakh, and hold a referendum on 29 December.

Elmira Kafarova, chairwoman of the Azerbaijan Republic Supreme Soviet; Ziyad Samedzade, first deputy chairman of the Azerbaijan Republic Supreme Soviet; Tamerlan Karayev, deputy chairman of the Azerbaijan Republic Supreme Soviet; Mitat Abasov, state secretary of the Azerbaijan Republic; R. Agayev, head of the Baku City Administrative Agency; and other responsible officials participated in the meeting.

Economic Agreement Signed With Russia

NC2312195791 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1800 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Text] Azerbaijan and Russia have reached an agreement in Moscow on the principles of a trade and economic cooperation. The agreement was signed by Gasan Gasanov, prime minister of the Azerbaijan Council of Ministers, and Burbulis, first deputy prime minister of Russia.

Russia will supply Azerbaijan with sufficient amounts of metals, crude oil, raw materials for the metallurgical industry, machinery engineering products, means of transportation, and other types of traditional products. Russia will continue to be the main importer of Azerbaijan's petroleum products, machinery products, refined petroleum products, metal pipes, primary aluminum products, chemical substances, agricultural products, wine and vodka, canned fruits and vegetables, and other products.

Gasanov said: Russia has been Azerbaijan's main economic partner; it will continue to be so in the future. The two republics are linked with many economic ties, he said, adding: The disruption of these ties would have very negative effects on the economic situation of Azerbaijan and Russia. We have been the only supplier of oil refining machinery to Russia, he noted, saying that regardless of [words indistinct] confusion, disintegration, and the disruption of (?performance), which have caused unemployment, we have succeeded in reaching an agreement to continue to supply products to each other.

Bakatin, Security Minister Sign Agreement

PM1612112191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 12 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Untitled report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, INTERFAX, RIA, REUTER roundup]

[Text] V. Bakatin, leader of the USSR ISS [Interrepublic Security Service], and I. Guseynov, Azerbaijan minister of national security, have signed an agreement on relations for the transitional period.

The ISS Public Relations Center has reported that the agreement recognizes the expediency of endowing the ISS with the functions of coordinating the activities of security organs.

Georgia

Reportage Notes Renewed Fighting in Tbilisi

Talks Fail; Shooting Continues

LD2612182491 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1630 GMT 26 Dec 91

[From the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] A RUSSIAN INFORMATION AGENCY [RIA] correspondent who contacted the Transcaucasus Military District Headquarters duty officer by telephone today was informed that the exchange of fire between government forces and the armed opposition continued all night outside the government's headquarters in the center of Tbilisi. Reinforcements for the president arrived in Tbilisi from outlying districts of the republic yesterday. These detachments are now inside the government headquarters.

According to the duty officer, the talks between representatives of the government and the opposition on this subject yesterday did not produce any results whatsoever. The RIA correspondent was unable to contact the government headquarters by the special communications link, and there is still no communication with the government headquarters today.

'Positional Warfare,' Crime Reported

LD2612195191 Moscow TASS in English 1923 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By correspondent Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi December 26 TASS—Fighting between the supporters and opponents of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia in downtown Tbilisi today assumed a protracted form of positional warfare.

Instead of attacks or counterattacks, they resort to aimed fire from all types of weapons available with them to neutralise the other side's weapon emplacements.

Rustaveli Avenue, the republic's Government House and adjacent blocks have become the scene of fierce fighting which has been going on for the fifth day, with each side stating an intention to fight to the last.

The once most beautiful and ancient central thoroughfare, the avenue has been defaced by fighting. Some buildings have been reduced to ruins or destroyed by fires caused by tracer bullets.

Rumours are now rife in the city that the opposition is about to launch a final assault on the Government House and differing time for the start of an assault are mentioned.

However, every time rumours turn out to be false. The conflicting sides apparently have no sufficient forces and resources to bring about a fundamental change into their favour and defeat the adversary.

Meanwhile the city is being swept by an orgy of robberies and violence. Cars are being seized at gun-point, people are being subjected to assault and battery, apartments are robbed, murders committed.

Russia Warned Not To Interfere

LD2612214691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1947 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By correspondent Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 26 Dec (TASS)—Tengiz Sigua, leader of the Georgian opposition and former Prime Minister of the republic, in a radio message sent to Russian President Boris Yeltsin, has categorically refuted rumors that the opposition has lost the battle. We are controlling the situation in the center and on the territory of the city, which includes the Shota Rustaveli Prospekt and nearby territories, says the message. Tengiz Sigua is insisting that Russia not interfere in the internal affairs of the Georgians and answer the question "on the possibility of Russia rendering armed assistance to Zviad Gamsakhurdia."

Since the clashes started in the center of Tbilisi, 43 people have been killed and 219 wounded, according to information provided by the Georgian Health and Social Security Ministry. Passers-by are among the casualties of clashes that occurred at 1500 today. There was an incident when a woman received an gunshot wound 1.5 km from Government House, where there have been exchanges of fire for five consecutive days.

IPRINTA Information Agency reports today, referring to Tengiz Sigua, that a delegation from the Chechen Republic, headed by its foreign minister, arrived in Tbilisi today. According to him, the delegation is in Government House and has met with Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia. At the request of the opposition, it conveyed the opposition's proposals for talks between the warring sides. There has been no answer yet, however. Tengiz Sigua told journalists that the opposition is reluctant to storm Government House because of the many defenseless people in the building, in particular the approximately 400 young recruits of the National Guard who have remained loyal to the president of the republic. In his words, the opposition is trying to devise a plan of action that would ensure minimal bloodshed during the storming of Government House.

Answering a question on his stance on the Commonwealth of Independent States, the leader of the Georgian opposition replied that he has had no chance to study the possibility of Georgia joining the Commonwealth and, therefore, is not prepared to express a definite opinion.

This evening a meeting organized by the supporters of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia was held near the state university building. Around 3,000 people attended, demanding that the Georgian militia should play an active role in defending the president. The organizers of the meeting proposed that all men aged 18 to 60 should form volunteer units to defend the lawful power. It seems that the Georgian militia will refrain from acting in support of either side. All of its employees have changed into civilian clothing.

The road patrol is nowhere to be seen in Tbilisi either. There are two tanks by the building of the republican Ministry of Internal Affairs, and it is clear from the way they look that they had been taken from the base of a monument. There are intensified preparations here for a possible attack by armed opposition units.

A military transport aircraft is bringing humanitarian aid from Russia to Tbilisi for the Georgian Santeli Red Cross service. The humanitarian aid was sent at the initiative of the Russian parliament.

Military Aircraft Delivers Medicine

LD2612223291 Moscow TASS in English 2211 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Moscow December 26 TASS—An IL-18 military transportation plane took off from Chkalovsky airfield near Moscow tonight, heading for Tbilisi with a cargo of 2.5 tonnes of medicines, to be delivered to Vaziani airport. The medicines have been sent by the Union of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (URCRCS).

Surgical instruments and dressings are intended for those who have been injured in combat actions near the Government House in Tbilisi, Vladimir Vasilenko, a departmental chief at the URCRCS Executive Committee, told TASS.

Medical aid will be given to all the wounded and injured regardless of the side they affiliate with, he said.

The role of the military in this humanitarian mission is noteworthy. As is known, they remain fully neutral in the days-long conflict, preferring to bring medicines to Tbilisi, not ammunition.

Foreign Minister Criticizes Baker

LD2712030191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0200 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] According to a TASS report from Washington, Murman Omanidze, minister of foreign affairs of Georgia, has accused U.S. Secretary of State Baker of encouraging political violence and anti-government speeches in the republic. In the letter from Omanidze to the head of the U.S. foreign political department circulated in Washington, it is indicated that all the criticism Baker quite recently expressed regarding Georgia is based on incorrect information or information from unreliable sources. The letter was made public by the Georgian information department in Washington, obviously in response to the statement by President Bush, who announced recognition of the independence of Georgia, but added that diplomatic recognition will only follow after the United States makes sure of the adherence of the republic's leadership to a responsible policy in the sphere of security and to democratic principles.

The letter to Baker also criticized specific comments made by the secretary of state during his speech on 12 December at Princeton University in the United States. It is clear that other governments, Baker said, particularly Georgia, are already showing that communism may be replaced by a government which is authoritarian and equally unworthy of our recognition or support.

Omanidze stated that he is struck by the fact that Baker is ignoring the democratic elections in Georgia, including the fact that it was the first republic to hold free, multi-party elections, having permitted the activity of 134 political parties and the existence of 25 opposition newspapers.

President 'Not Against' Talks

LD2712092191 Moscow TASS in English 0802 GMT 27 Dec 91

[By correspondent Yuriy Kirilchenko]

[Text] New York December 27 TASS—Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who is staying in the besieged Government House in Tbilisi, said he may begin talks with the opposition to settle the crisis but will continue resistance.

In an interview with the U.S. Cable News Network, Gamsakhurdia said "I will not surrender. People elected me and they will defend our power".

He called his opponents "liars and terrorists" but expressed readiness to begin negotiations with them if they stop fighting.

"I'm not against talks, but I'm against their criminal methods, criminal violence and civil war. I can hold talks and discuss problems. Their main goal is to force me to resign," Gamsakhurdia said.

He also stressed that he may hold a referendum in the republic if the need arises.

Leader Proposes International Help

LD2712092791 Moscow TASS in English 0857 GMT 27 Dec 91

[By correspondent Sergey Voytishkin]

[Text] London December 27 TASS—The Georgian Government has proposed to set up an independent international committee to settle the crisis in the republic.

In an official statement released by Gamsakhurdia's representative in London late Thursday [26 December], the Georgian leader said that "the sovereign state of Georgia, guided by goodwill, invites an independent committee consisting of representatives of the EC Commission, Commonwealth states and the League of Arab States to visit Tbilisi any time to make sure that the Georgian Government shows goodwill and that the Georgian people fully support legitimate authorities, and

see the ruins left by a group of rebels who recognise no 'democratic' means except the illegal use of weapons".

Georgia maintains that it does not have territorial claims to its neighbours and pledges to observe human rights and to respect the rights of ethnic minorities in the republic, the statement said.

Outcome To Affect Regional Geopolitics

PM2612165491 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 26 Dec 91 p 1

[By special correspondents O. Karmaza, N. Mikeladze: "Tbilisi: It Seems the Denouement Is Close"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] It is an illusion to think that Tbilisi is currently deciding its own and only its own internal affairs. The nature of these events touches on the geopolitics of the entire Caucasian and adjacent regions. It can be assumed that in the event of an opposition victory, Georgia will seek to restore its severed ties with European and other states of the former Union. President Gamsakhurdia, whom Europe condemns, is on the contrary making active efforts to establish ties with Turkey and Iran.

Georgian Prime Minister Gugushvili has stated that the main motive prompting the putschists' actions was the authorities' intention to sign neither the earlier Union treaty nor the Commonwealth agreement. But news that has leaked out that Gamsakhurdia has apparently expressed the desire to join the Commonwealth has confused the logically structured views of his supporters (and his opponents, too). If he has "given in," does it mean anything? Or is it just another tactical move?

Council Issues Ultimatum to Soviet Army Units

PM2312091991 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 21 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

[TASS-RIA report under the "Independent States" rubric: "Security Not Guaranteed"]

[Text] The Georgian Supreme Council Commission for the Protection of Human Rights has appealed to the personnel of military subunits of the former Soviet Defense Ministry and Interior Ministry stationed in the republic to leave their present deployment locations and return to their republics and families or else recognize Georgia's jurisdiction.

It is noted that the republic's Supreme Council resolution adopted two weeks ago on the transfer of Soviet army formations to the jurisdiction of Georgia is the only normative act that enables them to be a legal formation. Otherwise, the message stresses, the Georgian parliament will be faced with the question of declaring these units an illegal military formation.

Soviet Command Rejects Demand

LD2212052791 Moscow TASS in English 1940 GMT 20 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi December 20 TASS—The command of the Soviet military formations in Georgia believes that the intention of the Georgian parliamentary human rights commission to declare the formations illegal, runs counter to international legal norms and is a gross political mistake.

[Words indistinct] address of the command to the Georgian president and parliament expressed the support for the republican leadership's desire to create a civilized law-governed state.

The statement of Georgian parliamentarians aims to stir up the aggressiveness against the army and will provoke a new coil of provocations against the military, the address says.

Within the two previous days alone, military facilities have been attacked in Tbilisi, an act of sabotage at the army ammunition storage in Akhaltsikhe and seizures of military vehicles have been reported.

Order Bans Military Hardware Exports

LD2212055991 Moscow TASS in English 1430 GMT 21 Dec 91

[By correspondent Viktor Voronyuk]

[Text] Tbilisi December 21 TASS—The head of Georgia's national guard main department, V. Kobaliya, signed an order banning weapons, military hardware, property and other material values from being taken out of Georgia.

The document says checkpoints will be set up to stop their export.

Unlawful armed groups, separate groups and individuals are categorically prohibited from seizing by force and appropriating weapons, equipment and other property from servicemen and troop units because these actions discredit the government and the national guard and create an uncontrollable situation.

All those who unlawfully acquired weapons and other military property are to turn them in to the national guard department before January 1, 1992. Those who fail to fulfill the order will be regarded as stealers of state property.

Interrepublic Affairs

States Sign Package of Economic Agreements

PM2312111991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 20 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Correspondent V. Kuleshov report: "Structures of Consultative Council of Five Central Asian Republics and Kazakhstan Confirmed"]

[Text] Ashkhabad—In development of the accords reached at the Ashkhabad meeting of the five presidents, its second round has ended here. The deputy heads of government of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan participated in it.

The meeting of plenipotentiary representatives of the five republics' heads of government resulted in the signing of a whole package of documents on the coordination of interstate economic policy. The structures of the Consultative Council were confirmed. Its main aim is to formulate unified approaches in implementing economic policy in the interests of all the peoples of the Central Asian region with due regard for the specific features of each sovereign republic.

In particular, an agreement was signed on pricing policy as a measure for the population's social protection against the harsh negative consequences of the upcoming price increases in other republics of the former Union. For these purposes an interstate emission bank will be set up, and a committee to coordinate the five republics' socioeconomic development will be formed. In addition, the statute states, the council will regulate interrepublic, intereconomy ties, coordinate the fulfillment of mutual pledges, resolve questions of the construction of projects of the greatest importance to all the republics, and prepare proposals on organizing joint production of goods in increased demand.

One of the key aspects of the accord among the republics was the signing at the Ashkhabad conference of a number of protocols providing for specific measures to ensure interrepublic deliveries of goods and output: In the very first quarter of next year the interexchange of products will amount to no less than 25 percent of the level of agreed interrepublic deliveries.

A very important aspect of the Consultative Council's activity will be the expansion of ties with foreign countries, the creation of joint ventures, and all possible access to the external market for the republics. For this the conference of deputy heads of state deemed it expedient to make joint use of the Caspian Sea's ports, to modernize the existing commercial wharves at Krasnovodsk, Guryev, and Aktau, and to construct new ones. The "Khemayat" Association has been established to accelerate the construction of the Tedzhen-Serakhs-Mashhad railroad line, which has been ordered by the Turkmen Railroad. It is recommended that the association include enterprises and organizations of the republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

Kazakhstan

Supreme Council Adopts Citizenship Law

LD2112043691 Moscow TASS in English 0006 GMT 21 Dec 91

[By KAZTAG correspondent Konstantin Borodinov]

[Text] Alma-Ata December 20 TASS—In Kazakhstan the law on citizenship was adopted by a session of the Kazakhstan Supreme Council on Friday [20 December]. Citizens will be equal before law regardless of social and property status, nationality, religion, political and other convictions.

Under this law no one can be stripped of citizenship or be denied the right to alter it. A separate article contains the provision that a Kazakhstan citizen cannot be extradited to another country, except for cases covered by interstate treaties.

The powers of president and state agencies dealing with citizenship—agencies for interior and foreign affairs, diplomatic missions and consulates—are defined.

The law on citizenship goes into effect as of March, 1992. Similar all-Union legislation will be in effect until then.

Parliamentarian Leader on Price Liberalization

OW2612195291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1727 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Serikbolsin Abdildin, chairman of the Kazakh Supreme Council, said in Alma-Ata Thursday [26 December] that at a Minsk meeting on December 30 leaders of the Commonwealth states are expected to set a single date for the liberalization of prices. Lack of coordination, he noted, would only hamper progress. "If Russia is the first to free prices, Kazakhstan will immediately do the same," he said.

Commenting on the Kazakh Supreme Council's reaction to Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation, Mr. Abdildin observed that Mr. Gorbachev "might have done more for the country and the people."

Kyrgyzstan

Cooperation Agreements With Turkey Concluded

LD2312225591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1719 GMT 23 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Litvinenko]

[Excerpts] Ankara, 23 Dec (TASS)— An "agreement on friendship and cooperation between the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Turkey" was concluded

in Ankara today. It was signed by Askar Akayev and Turgut Ozal,the presidents of the two states.

The document makes provision for holding regular consultations on questions of bilateral relations, and also on international and regional problems. It was agreed to make efforts to increase the trade turnover between the two countries to a level corresponding to the existing potential. Kyrgyzstan and Turkey, relying on the closeness of their historical and cultural traditions, will exchange information and experience in matters of the economy, science, and technology, and maintain contacts at all levels. The parties agreed to open consulates general.

The "agreement on economic and trade cooperation between the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Turkey", also concluded here today, makes provision for exchange of goods and services, the creation of joint ventures, and cooperation in the fields of agriculture, industry, transport, communications, health care, and environmental protection. A "protocol on accords" was also signed, according to which it is planned in the near future to set up a Turkish-Kyrgyz business council and to determine forms of cooperation in cultural, tourism, sports, and educational matters. [passage omitted]

Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev also met today with Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel.

Akayev on 'Promising Prospects'

LD2712020291 Moscow TASS in English 1659 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Chelyshev]

[Text] Istanbul December 26 TASS—"No doubt, the major outcome of our visit to Turkey was the establishment of relations between Kyrgyzstan and Turkey on a state level" Askar Akayev, president of Kyrgyzstan told TASS. "We are happy Turkey has become the first country to recognise our independence. It is very important as the Kyrgyz and Turkish people are brother nations. They are bound together by blood, language and religion. The agreements signed in Ankara on interstate relations between Kyrgyzstan and Turkey, in the first place, open for us very wide prospects and possibilities for developing political, economic and cultural ties. We wish to become a strong, independent and free republic, and we hope Turkey will help us achieve it," Akayev stressed.

In reply to a question about prospects for cooperation between the two countries in the economic field, Akayev said: "The meetings and talks held in Turkey inspire me with great hopes. We managed to interest Turkish business people in establishing and developing economic collaboration with our Republic. The agreement on this issue signed in Ankara opens a wide space for Turkish entrepreneurs and for their interaction with our business circles. The protocol on the issue signed by both sides may become a basis for future mutual activities. According to the document, the Turkish side, in case of a mutual interest, will start carrying out a number of concrete as creating a modern telecommunication system. [sentence as received] A station of satellite communication will be constructed in Kyrgyzstan as a gift from Turkey. The station will connect Kyrgyzstan with the rest of the world. We hope to put into effect a project dealing with opening air communication between Bishkek and Istanbul which in prospect can be a continuation of the air-route Bishkek-Seoul-Tokyo. In this way we would like to become a sort of a link between West and East, similar to the "great silky way." We reached principled agreements on setting up a number of joint ventures on processing farm produce, leather, making chinaware and consumer goods in the Republic. We also reached agreements to create enterprises processing mineral raw materials, since up to now Kyrgyzstan has an economy based on raw materials, but we need to create modern processing industry. This project will be profitable for Turkey, too, especially from the viewpoint of obtaining rare metals and raw materials. So, on the whole we have very promising prospects.

According to Akayev, "The business circles showed a great interest in cooperation with us and promised to render us real assistance in the republic's transition to a market economy. It is important for us to study the Turkish experience in its economic evolution to make use of the most important and helpful elements, and at the same time to avoid Turkish errors and difficulties it had on its way. We hope to get assistance from the Turkish side in training modern managers, bankers, entrepreneurs who could carry out the economic reform we began in the Republic."

"We will do our utmost to strengthen and widen our cultural ties with Turkey which is now a kind of a center of attraction for Turkic peoples," Akayev stressed.

Tajikistan

Decision on Presidential Powers Postponed

LD2612151191 Moscow TASS in English 1329 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Galina Gridneva]

[Text] Dushanbe December 26 TASS—The Tajik parliament decided to put off granting additional authorities to President Rachmon Nabiyev which would permit him appoint and relieve of duties heads of local soviets.

According to parliamentary committee on state structure who came forward with the idea the decision could help reinforce local executive authority and become an important means of overcoming locally-oriented trends in electing the local executive committees heads. [sentence as received] The proposal encountered opposition of radical parliamentary wing who saw a threat to democratic rule in the decision. The discussion ended

"in a draw," most of the delegates deciding to return to the problem at the next sitting of the parliament.

The parliament took a decision to abolish the republican security committee. A committee for national security will be organised instead.

Foreign Minister on Republic's Foreign Policy

LD2512123391 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network in Tajik 1700 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Interview with Tajik Foreign Minister Lakim Kayumov by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Esteemed Lakim Kayumov, we talked when the USSR Foreign Ministry was replaced with the USSR External Relations Ministry six weeks ago. Many great changes have taken place since then, including this ministry's transfer to Russian jurisdiction in accordance with a Russian Supreme Soviet decision. Who will (?represent) Tajik interests in the international arena? Which state will represent the former Soviet Union in the United Nations? Tajik citizens are very worried about these issues today.

[Kayumov] The questions you just raised astonish Tajik people. They cannot find a proper answer to these questions because the changes taking place overnight are so great that even politicians are unable to analyze them. We do not know which country the former USSR embassies represent because the country's name has changed; even the foreign embassies in Moscow, capital of the former Soviet Union, do not know which country to which they are assigned. (?This is) astonishing [words indistinct]. One item in Yeltsin's decree says that Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev ought to hold talks within a month with representatives of independent countries—the former Soviet republics—to establish a council to cooperate in [words indistinct] issues. Therefore, one can sense that it is possible that international questions and the most fundamental questions of foreign affairs of the now independent states will be tackled through consultations and an exchange of views between these countries. As a sovereign republic, we ought to solve the issues of our foreign policy directly and by ourselves.

Supreme Soviet Chairman Addresses Journalists

LD2512084391 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 2032 GMT 23 Dec 91

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] Chairman of Tajikistan's Supreme Soviet reiterated his readiness to prohibit broadcasting programs of the Central TV and discontinue publication of IZVESTIYA newspaper if their activity endangers civil accord in the Republic. Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Tajikistan Safarali Kendyayev made this statement at the Congress of Journalists of Tajikistan on December 21. Kendyayev also complained about sharp change in the tone of the media's appraisals of his person during the period of the 15-day meeting held from September 23 till October 6 and expressed his dissatisfaction with the fact that the newspaper CHAROGY RUZ called him a fascist and head of the republican mafia. The journalist's congress approved a new charter of the republican union, discussed the problems of social and legal protection of journalists, inadmissibility of infringement of the freedom of speech even on the part of Tajikistan's Supreme Soviet and president. The journalists stated that they were looking into the future with anxiety because of the tremendous leap of prices for paper, print shop and mail services expected after the new year. It was decided to address to the Supreme Soviet with a legislative initiative concerning exemption of new newspapers from 35 per cent income tax. The congress elected a new secretary of the journalist's union, Otakhon Latifi was replaced in this position by his deputy, Mirzohaet Davlat.

India To Strengthen Ties With Republic

OW2712001091 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1737 GMT 26 Dec 91

[From "Diplomatic Panorama" program; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] India is going to strengthen its economic, trade and cultural relations with Tajikistan, according to a telegram sent by the Indian Prime Minister to Tajikistan's President, Mr. Rakhmon Nabiyev. The telegram also contains an official invitation to Tajikistan's leaders to pay an official visit to Delhi.

Republic Cuts Back Management Apparatus

PM2712091791 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 19 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

[Unattributed report: "Cutbacks"]

[Text] A large-scale campaign has begun in Tajikistan to cut back the management apparatus in all the state structures. Republic President Rakhmon Nabiyev has set an example by issuing instructions to cut back his apparatus by 40 percent.

He expressed the hope that leaders of ministries, state committees, and departments will streamline their power structures without waiting for instructions from above.

Naturally, the republic leadership must take care to reassign the people who are made redundant.

Ground Fire Hits Helicopter on Afghan Border

LD2612161891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1447 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By TADZHIKTA correspondent Salokhiddin Ergashev]

[Text] Dushanbe, 26 Dec (TASS)—An MI-8 border helicopter was fired upon today from the territory of Afghanistan while it was making a reconnaissance flight along the state border in the vicinity of the Moskovskiy border detachment of the Central Asian border district. The helicopter's power supply system was damaged, but the crew was able to complete the flight safely.

This is the third incident this year of border helicopters being fired upon from adjoining territory on this section of the southern border.

Turmenia

President Discusses Commonwealth, Military

OW2612162491 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1521 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] At its extraordinary session today (December 26) the Supreme Council of Turkmenistan ratified the Alma-Ata agreements on the forming of the Commonwealth of Independent States. It also decided to recall Turkmenistan's deputies from the USSR parliament and recognized the independence of all Commonwealth states.

Speaking at the session, Turkmenistan's President, Saparmurad Niyazov, described the initiative of Russia, the Ukraine and Belarus as a "Solomon decision," adding that the forming of such a commonwealth met the interests of the Turkmen people.

President Niyazov informed the parliament that the Ashkhabad meeting of the presidents of five republics—Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan—which had been held on December 13-14, before the Alma-Ata meeting, considered the creation of an alternative state to comprise the four Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan. But the plan was dropped after President Niyazov had had a telephone conversation with the Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, who accepted the proposals of "the five."

The Turkmen President stressed, however, that Turkmenistan would leave the Commonwealth if any infringement upon its dignity was made.

Dealing with military matters, the President said it was up to his republic itself to decide whether it should have nuclear weapons or not, and that "Turkmenistan will yield to nobody's pressure in this matter." But he did not say if there were any nuclear weapons on the republic's territory at the moment.

There are 76 Soviet Army units stationed in Turkmenistan at present, some of which will be removed from the republic, but the deadlines are, according to President Niyazov, yet to be fixed. The remaining forces will be subordinated to the President of Turkmenistan, for which Uzbekistan, where the headquarters of the Turkestan Military District are located, has given its consent. Legislation to this effect is soon going to be passed.

President Niyazov also stressed the necessity to organize a national guard corps in the republic, approximately the size of a division, though he did not mention when this was going to be done.

Free prices, the President said, would be introduced in Turkmenistan on January 6, before which a set of social security measures would have to be taken. He would shortly sign decrees putting up salaries in establishnents maintained out of the budget 2.9 times over, raising pensions and student grants to 350 rubles, removing any restrictions on the size of wages, and cutting the work week down to 40 hours.

Each republic in the Commonwealth, including Turkmenistan, is, according to President Niyazov, considering the introduction of its own currency. Turkmenistan, he said, could do this in a matter of 10-15 days.

Trade, Economic Agreement Signed With Russia

LD2612221291 Moscow TASS in English 1812 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Ashkhabad December 26 TASS—Turkmenistan and Russia on Thursday [26 December] signed a treaty on trade and economic cooperation in 1992. The treaty was signed by Deputy Prime Minister Ata Charyev and Yegor Gaydar.

Cooperation between the two states will be mutually beneficial. Turkmenistan will sell Russia gas, cotton and other farm products in exchange for Russian-made cars, tractors, buses, iron, and textiles.

Communist Party Ends; 'Democratic Party' Born

PM2012140591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 17 Dec 91 p 1

[Untitled report from PRAVDA-TASS roundup under the "Day's Pulse" rubric]

[Text] The Turkmen Communist Party has ended its existence with a verdict against itself. The decision to liquidate it was passed by its 25th congress, held in Ashkhabad yesterday.

The report delivered by Central Committee Second Secretary A.D. Dodonov not only made a stern and self-critical assessment of the Communist Party's activity but also cited a detailed program for the democratic party which is to replace it. The congress was addressed by S.A. Niyazov, first secretary of the Turkmen Communist Party Central Committee and president of Turkmenistan. At the subsequent constituent congress of the democratic party he was elected its chairman.

Istanbul Paper Interviews President Niyazov

NC2112210991 Istanbul CUMHURIYET in Turkish 18 Dec 91 p 7

[Interview with Saparmurad Niyazov, president of Turkmenia, by CUMHURIYET correspondent Fatih Yilmaz in Ashkhabad; date not given]

[Text] Ashkhabad—[Yilmaz] How was your visit to Turkey? To what extent will Turkey be able to meet your expectations?

[Niyazov] We expect a great deal from Turkey. We have asked that our independence be recognized. (Turkmenia declared its independence after the coup attempt against Mikhail Gorbachev) Turkey has responded with understanding. I believe that it will recognize Turkmenia's independence. Meanwhile, we can achieve a great deal with Turkey in the economic domain. We wish to cooperate with Turkey to extract and process Turkmenia's natural resources. I disclosed in Turkey that we will give citizenship and land to those who wish to move from Turkey to Turkmenia. We regard Turkey not as a door which opens to the western world, but as a partner, which, together with its great potential, can help Turkmenia develop its economy. Turkey is willing in that regard as well. We hope to see great figures in our trade volume within a few years time. Turkey is a very important country for Turkmenia. It has become even more important at the present time.

[Yilmaz] Are you in favor of the establishment of a Turkic common market?

[Niyazov] That can be achieved. We are open to any kind of suggestion. Time is passing very quickly. Hostilities cannot be allowed to emerge at this stage. We must not take steps which will take us back to the past. I wish to explain why I have said this as follows: The adoption of a hardline Pan-Turkic concept will do more harm than good. Everyone, including myself, is interested in the idea that the Turkic peoples establish economic and cultural unity and share their natural resources. I am not against any effort that may be made to achieve that objective. Nevertheless, this should not be the only determining factor. I believe that the concept of political unity is a farfetched idea, an illusion. I was pleased to hear Turkish officials say the same thing.

[Yilmaz] You have been described as the harshest dictator in Central Asia. The Communist Party is still in office. Reports say that you do not give any opportunity whatsoever to opposition groups in Turkmenia.

[Niyazov] Well now, you must realize that our country has to deal with unique conditions. The most important problem at present is to resolve the economic crisis. The Turkmen Government has given priority to the economy. We have entered a transitional period as a result of the unfolding of the Soviet Union. The developments have created anarchy [anarshi] and confusion. If officials fail to maintain a firm policy, then expectations cannot be realized. The Turkmen people are aware of this. Very few people attend the meetings that are organized by the opposition groups. The opposition leaders are not arrested. Everyone is free to express his opinion. This being the case, can the situation in Turkmenia be described as a dictatorship?

Uzbekistan

President Visits Turkey, Signs Accords

LD2112233691 Moscow TASS in English 1048 GMT 20 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Litvinenko]

[Text] Ankara December 20 TASS—Turkey is proud to be the first country to recognize the independence of Uzbekistan, Turkish President Turgut Ozal said at a dinner honouring Uzbek President Islam Karimov on Thursday [19 December].

Karimov thanked the people and the leaders of Turkey and said bilateral agreements signed during his visit will strengthen ties between Turkey and Uzbekistan.

"Please relay our warmest wishes to the brotherly Uzbek people. We will always be together with our Uzbek brothers. I am sure the agreements which were signed here will start producing results in the near future. Our people are longing for that. A firm foundation for success lies in our peoples' common kinship, language and religion. I am sure the people of Turkey and Uzbekistan as well as the people of Turkestan as a whole will become respected members of the world community by the year 2000," Ozal said.

Present at the dinner were Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel, cabinet ministers and other officials. The Uzbek delegation left home on Thursday evening.

Accords Signed

LD2212104291 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1630 GMT 20 Dec 91

[From the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] The official visit to Turkey by Islam Karimov, president of the Republic of Uzbekistan, ended today. Our correspondent reports from Ankara on its results.

[Correspondent Sh. Ganiyeva] The main political event of the visit was the official recognition of the independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan by the government of Turkey and Turgut Ozal, its president. It is the first foreign state to have officially proclaimed this.

During the days of the visit, accords were reached in the spheres of trade, economic, and cultural cooperation. Great attention during the negotiations was paid to the establishment of consular relations between Turkey and

Uzbekistan, the opening of direct agency links between major banks in Ankara and the Uzbek National Bank, and relations between Turkish businessmen and the Union of Uzbekistan Entrepreneurs. These accords have now come into force. [Video shows consultations between Uzbeks and Turks and signing of accords]

Protocols of intent were also signed on cooperation in the sphere of science, education, communications, and telecommunications. In the near future Uzbek and Turkish cultural information centers are to be officially opened in Ankara and Tashkent, respectively.

However, the main event on the final day of the visit was the signing by Presidents Turgut Ozal and Islam Karimov of a long-term agreement on the principles of interstate relations between the Republic of Uzbekistan and Turkey. [video shows Ozal and Karimov signing agreement and afterwards exchanging copies and shaking hands]

[Ozal, in Turkish with superimposed Russian translation] I hope that these first independent steps in the foreign policy of the independent Republic of Uzbekistan will benefit and serve the cause of equal cooperation between our states.

[Karimov] In our movement toward a market economy we dwelt on and have now finally chosen the course and model being followed by Turkey. This suits us, and we consider that we will be moving precisely in this direction.

President Returns Home

LD2212234191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1125 GMT 20 Dec 91

[By UZTAG correspondent Lev Levin]

[Text] Turkey, 20 Dec (UZTAG-TASS)—Islam Karimov, president of the Republic of Uzbekistan, returned to Tashkent today after completing his first official visit to Turkey.

In an interview given to the UZTAG-TASS coresondent at the airport, I. Karimov noted that the visit to Turkey was fruitful and that eight very important agreements had been signed. Chief among these was the treaty on the foundations of interstate relations between Turkey and Uzbekistan, a document based on equality and mutual advantage.

In response to a question regarding the fact that some circles regard the visit as the creation of a sort of Muslim alliance, the president replied that there was no need to whip up passions and put forward various false interpretations. In the present difficult situation, when the USSR has fallen apart, Uzbekistan should choose its own effective path of development. The economic model used by Turkey is acceptable for our republic, too, said I. Karimov, all the more so since there is a history of friendship between our peoples.

The president was asked about the republic's position at the forthcoming meeting in Alma-Ata.

"This meeting," Islam Karimov noted, "should determine the fate of the country."

President Karimov Interviewed on Turkish Ties

NC2712091291 Istanbul CUMHURIYET in Turkish 20 Dec 91 p 7

[Interview with Uzbek President Islam Karimov by CUMHURIYET correspondent Fatih Yilmaz in Tashkent; date not given]

[Text] [Yilmaz] What is your opinion on Turkey?

[Karimov] We regard Turkey as an elder brother. The support Turkey will give to us is very important for Uzbekistan's future. If Turkey supports us in every respect then Uzbekistan will not be dominated by any country. What I mean is economic, cultural, and political domination. We have many things to learn from Turkey. We have many shortcomings. Turkey must help us put things right. We hope that it will. The whole of Central Asia expects a great deal from Turkey now. We maintain a cautious approach on the Soviet system's new form. We do not wish to be oppressed again. We are seeking Turkey's support.

[Yilmaz] Uzbekistan is one of the Central Asian republics in which the Islamic trend is very strong. There have been demands to adopt the Arabic alphabet. Meanwhile, you have been accused of being a dictator.

[Karimov] Yes, this is true. Historically, the Islamic trend has been strong in Uzbekistan. Now there is exhilaration, caused by the Soviet Government removal. I do not believe that Islam will pose Uzbekistan a significant threat. Nor do I believe that our people are radical. The Uzbek people can neutralize fanaticism through logic and reason. The majority have a secular mentality. We do not wish to interfere with the people's religious freedom. We do not want Uzbekistan to be influenced by radical trends. I am accused of being a dictator because of my resolute stand on these matters.

We are taking various measures to prevent our country from moving toward a precipice. That is why I have been accused of being a dictator. Confusion cannot be allowed to prevail anywhere. This also applies to Turkey. We shall decide between the Arab and the Latin alphabets. I prefer the Latin alphabet. Nevertheless, there are people who wish to adopt the Arab alphabet. The most influential Islamic centers were once in Uzbekistan. So, it is only natural that these demands will be put forward in our country. What we need is time. First, the economy must be put in the right direction. Eventually, what remains to be done will be achieved.

[Yilmaz] Iran and Saudi Arabia are making an intensive effort in Uzbekistan.

[Karimov] We can cooperate with any country according to mutual respect and noninterference in each other's internal affairs. We have close relations with Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. These relations are rooted in history. I maintain the same approach toward these countries. If you ask me I shall tell you that I prefer Turkey. What Uzbekistan wishes to achieve is in parallel with Ataturk's principles. I admire Ataturk. I hope that the peoples in Central Asia will achieve whatever he has achieved in Turkey.

[Yilmaz] What do you think about Turkic peoples' unity and a Turkic common market?

[Karimov] I support the concept of Turkic peoples' unity. This must be achieved. There can be talks on how to achieve it. Economic instead of political unity can be established, known as the Turkic common market. The Slavic people have established such unity. Why should the peoples in Central Asia not be able to do the same and why should this unity not include Turkey and Azerbaijan? I believe it will. Many people favor this idea in Central Asia. We are searching for new opportunities. Is it not true that one of the opportunities we are looking for is the concept establishing a Turkic common market? Every country knows what it can achieve.

President Karimov Campaigns in Republic

OW2512154891 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1200 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President Islam Karimov has said that his program is based on the need to strengthen Uzbekistan's independence and implement agreements signed with members of the Commonwealth. He is making a tour of the republic in the framework of his election campaign. Presidential elections in Uzbekistan are scheduled for Sunday the 29th.

As the candidate of Uzbekistan's People's Democratic party, I. Karimov has visited the Kashka-Darya region, where he began his career as Communist party leader, and the Bukhara region. On Wednesday he made a trip to Samarkand.

He will do all he can to overcome the signs of crisis as soon as possible, promote the economy and culture and raise the people's living standards, the presidential candidate told voters. The decrees adopted lately pursue precisely this goal, he said.

With reference to the outcome of his recent visit to Turkey I. Karimov said that Uzbekistan has good prospects for enhancing its prestige in the world community.